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Wouldn't It Be Nice?



IN MY PERFECT WORLD, the children would hang up their towels, every day would hover around 78°F, and there would be pie for breakfast. I haven't had much luck with the first two, but the third is my new reality, now that I have Karen Barker's irresistible recipes for fruit-filled hand pies (page 68). There are little fried peach pies and mini fig and raspberry crostatas, to name two I've set my sights on, but top on my list are the sugar-dusted treats here. They're filled with one of my favorite things about summer (blueberries) and they're surprisingly easy to make (purchased puff pastry).

And any day that starts with pie is bound to be a good one. We've got an issue's worth of ideas for filling it with great-tasting food, from the best fried chicken ever (page 35) to a salad of tea-smoked duck with green mango and basil (page 52). There are recipes for classic Bananas Foster (page 86), Fireman's Sausage (page 43), and a Tiki-inspired cocktail called the Lift-Off! (page 30), all of which will get you "fired" up (we're bringing flambé back).

Tomatoes are at their peak now, and we're making gazpacho (page 46), a 20-minute tomato jam (to spread on grilled bratwurst sandwiches, page 24), home-made tomato purée, and real ketchup (both, page 20). Thick slices of tomato also get stacked with grilled eggplant and fresh buffalo mozzarella (page 19)—a simple, summer-perfect dish that might make a fine light supper, if your perfect day also got its start with pie.



Laurie Buckle, editor
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More Fine Cooking

SPECIAL ISSUE

Don't miss our latest special issue, *Tailgating*, with more than 80 recipes for everything from snacks to hearty sandwiches and great grilled favorites, along with tips for stocking the portable bar. Available August 17; go to store.taunton.com to order.

BOOKS

Two of our contributing editors have new books. Abby Dodge's *Desserts 4 Today* is packed with 125 recipes that use only four ingredients each and take 30 minutes or less to make. Pam Anderson's *Perfect One-Dish Dinners* simplifies entertaining by providing complete menus centered on one memorable dish, from paella to stuffed pork loin. Both books are available in September.

FINE COOKING EPICUREAN CLASSIC

We're just a few weeks away from the wine and food event of the year! This food-filled weekend in late August will feature a stellar line up of cooks (Dorie Greenspan and Sara Moulton, among them) demonstrating dishes from their latest books, along with cookbook signings, tastings, auctions, parties, and more. For information, go to finecooking.com/ec.

blueberry-vanilla cream cheese pies

These are like mini blueberry cheesecakes wrapped in puff pastry.

Yields 12

- 2 17.3-oz. packages frozen puff pastry**
- 3 oz. cream cheese, softened**
- 7 Tbs. granulated sugar**
Seeds scraped from ½ vanilla bean
(or ½ tsp. pure vanilla extract)
- 2 large egg yolks**
- 1 cup blueberries**
- 2 tsp. cornstarch**
- 2 tsp. crème de cassis**
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt**
Confectioners' sugar for finishing

Thaw 3 sheets of puff pastry overnight in the refrigerator.

Position racks in the top and bottom thirds of the oven and heat the oven to 375°F.

In a medium bowl, combine the cream cheese, 3 Tbs. of the sugar, the vanilla bean seeds (or extract), and 1 of the egg yolks. Mix with a wooden spoon until well combined and smooth.

Combine the blueberries, 2 Tbs. of the sugar, the cornstarch, crème de cassis, and salt in another medium bowl and mix gently.

On a lightly floured surface, roll each pastry sheet into a 10-inch square. Using a 4-inch round cutter (or a small plate as a guide), cut out 4 rounds from each sheet. Arrange them on 2 parchment-lined rimmed baking sheets.

In a small bowl, beat the remaining egg yolk with 1 tsp. water. Brush the outer edge of each pastry round with the egg wash. Dollop ½ Tbs. of the cream cheese mixture in the center of each round. Top with 1 Tbs. of the blueberry mixture. Fold in half to form a half-moon shape and pinch the edges together to seal them. Lightly brush each pie with egg wash and sprinkle with ½ tsp. of the remaining sugar. With the tip of a paring knife, cut a steam vent in the center of each pie.

Bake until golden-brown, about 25 minutes, swapping and rotating the baking sheets' positions about halfway through. Cool slightly on the baking sheets and then transfer to a rack to cool completely. Before serving, sprinkle the pies with confectioners' sugar. These are best within a few hours of baking.

—Karen Barker



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THE WINNER

Reader tip: Soaking wooden skewers

To prevent wooden skewers from burning on the grill, many recipes call for soaking them in water first. A rinsed out wine bottle makes the perfect container for this. Fill the wine bottle with water, add the skewers, and replace the cork, which keeps the skewers submerged.

—Wendy L. Waldron, Bakersfield, California

We want to hear from you. Send us your best tip and we'll pick a winner from all the entries. Wendy is the winner of this Swiss Diamond breakfast/crêpe pan.

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Weeknight cooking kudos

As a food blogger, I try to find recipes that are easy yet fabulous, hoping my readers will think of me more as a chef than simply a home cook. You've never let me down.

I'm writing because I came across the "Chicken Sausages" article in the Big Buy Cooking column of your June/July issue. I never thought you could appeal to both my food blogger needs *and* my needs as a budget-conscious mother of two. I've wandered past the sausages at our local warehouse store many times, passing them by because I had no idea how we'd use them up. I'll be posting your delicious-sounding recipes as soon as I can cook them.

I also love the flank steak article with recipes for leftovers. What mother, or any cook, for that matter, doesn't love a way to enjoy creative, easy recipes throughout the week? I look forward to a delicious summer of *Fine Cooking* recipes served at our table.

—Kristy Bernardo, via email

The anchovy debate

In your April/May issue, there was an article on a "Classic" Caesar salad that included anchovy fillets. I think you're confusing classic with traditional. Traditionally, anchovies have been put in a Caesar salad,

but the classic salad does not have them. In Julia Child's book, *From Julia Child's Kitchen*, she writes of traveling to Tijuana and having a Caesar salad made by Caesar Cardini himself. In it, she explains that there were no anchovies.

—Phil Hardiman, via email

Soft shell shocked

I love *Fine Cooking* and have subscribed for many years; it is my favorite cooking magazine. Although I have killed many a lobster, that picture of the still-alive soft-shell crab really got to me; I had to cut out the page and discard it. That sweet face and those eyes—it's hard to eat someone you've looked in the eyes.

—Melody Favish, Oslo, Norway

CORRECTIONS

The Ultimate Fudgy Brownies recipe on page 31 of the June/July issue calls for 12 ounces of butter, which many of our readers dutifully pointed out is 1½ cups, not ¾ cup, as indicated. Also, the Homemade Graham Crackers recipe on page 70 calls for rolling the dough to a 16x3-inch rectangle. The correct dimensions are 16x13 inches. We apologize for any confusion.

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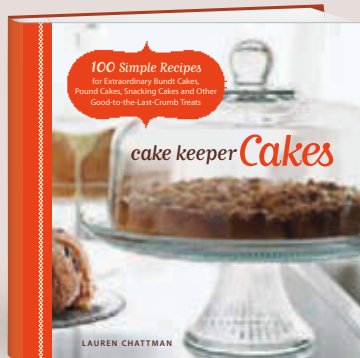
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CONTRIBUTORS



Robert Danhi ("Tea-Smoking," page 48) is the founder of Chef Danhi & Co., a restaurant consulting firm based in Los Angeles. He is the

author of the award-winning cookbook, *Southeast Asian Flavors: Adventures in Cooking the Foods of Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia & Singapore*.

- **The last thing I ate was...** breakfast, which was coconut rice with chili sambal, crispy whitebait, and a fried egg.
- **Three ingredients I always have on hand are...** several varieties of palm sugar, salt, and wild (kaffir) lime leaves.
- **My latest food discovery...** Thai coconut shells, turned into ash and added to desserts. It turns them a beautiful charcoal gray.



Pastry chef and cookbook author **Karen Barker** ("A Pie in Hand," page 68) co-owns the James Beard Award-winning Magnolia Grill in Durham, North Carolina,

with her husband, Ben. Known for her classic American desserts, she also won the James Beard Outstanding Pastry Chef Award in 2003.

- **The most underrated ingredient is...** salt. I use it constantly, even in baking.
- **My least favorite food is...** anything with fish roe.
- **My favorite aspect of my job is...** feeding people. It's easy to make people happy with dessert.



Deborah Racicot ("Bananas Foster," page 84), is the pastry chef at Gotham Bar & Grill in New York City. In 2008, she was named one of *Pastry Art & Design's* Top

Ten Pastry Chefs in America.

- **To a summer cookout, I'd bring...** dessert tabouli; I like to make it with peaches and almonds.
- **If I weren't a pastry chef, I'd be...** a horse veterinarian.
- **My favorite herb or spice is...** anise hyssop.



Food personality, historian, and cooking teacher **Poppy Tooker** ("Bananas Foster," page 84) has served for more than a decade on Slow Food's US

Ark of Taste Committee, working to promote and preserve heirloom foods and food traditions.

- **The strangest thing I've ever eaten was...** live baby soft-shell crab; it was sweet like sugar.
- **My least favorite food is...** salad. I'm bad like that.
- **My favorite comfort food is...** a baked potato serving as a vehicle for butter.



David Leite ("Bites for a Midsummer Night," page 40), is the publisher of the award-winning blog, *leitesculinaria.com*, and a freelance writer whose

work has appeared in various publications, including the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. His book, *The New Portuguese Table*, won the Julia Child First Book Award from the International Association of Culinary Professionals.

- **If I weren't a food writer, I'd be...** an actor.
- **The most underrated ingredient is...** beets. They're so versatile, and it's always fun to scare people when you cook them; just walk out of the kitchen carrying a knife, with red splattered all over you.
- **My food-related pet peeve is...** milk cartons with screw-caps. It's hard to drink from them.



Romulo Yanes ("Tea-Smoking," page 48) worked as the staff photographer for *Gourmet* magazine for almost 25 years. He also

has numerous cookbooks to his credit.

- **My guilty food pleasure is...** foie gras. It's delicious, and yes, I feel guilty eating it.
- **My favorite food memory is...** pig roasts at my grandmother's house in Cuba.
- **My favorite aspect of my job is...** eating almost everything I shoot.



Food stylist **Carrie Purcell** ("Bites for a Midsummer Night," page 40, and "Ten Ways to Eat Less Meat," page 54) recently moved from Santa Barbara, Cali-

fornia, to New York City. Her work has appeared in magazines, books, and on packaging for food products. She blogs at *picturesandpancakes.blogspot.com*.

- **The last thing I ate was...** a fava bean. I just blanched them for a risotto.
- **The most overrated ingredient is...** caviar. I'm not a caviar person.
- **My desert island food is...** a bottle of cold Champagne, to go with all the tropical fruit.



Susie Middleton ("Ten Ways to Eat Less Meat," page 54), *Fine Cooking's* editor at large, is a food writer, recipe developer, and the author of *Fast, Fresh & Green*. She

lives and grows her own vegetables on Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

- **My favorite food memory is...** family crab feasts at the beach; we'd crack them onto newspaper and drink beer.
- **My guilty food pleasure is...** chicken drippings.
- **My desert island food is...** bittersweet chocolate chips; they'd probably melt, though.



Pam Anderson ("Fried Chicken," page 34) is a *Fine Cooking* contributing editor; the monthly food columnist for *USA Week-end*, and a weekly blogger

at *threemanycooks.com*. Her sixth cookbook, *Perfect One-Dish Dinners: All You Need For Easy Get-Togethers*, comes out in September.

- **My favorite piece of kitchen equipment is...** my hands.
- **My desert island food is...** bread. And oranges to keep the scurvy away.
- **I'm currently obsessed with...** making vegetarian food so appealing that people celebrate eating it.

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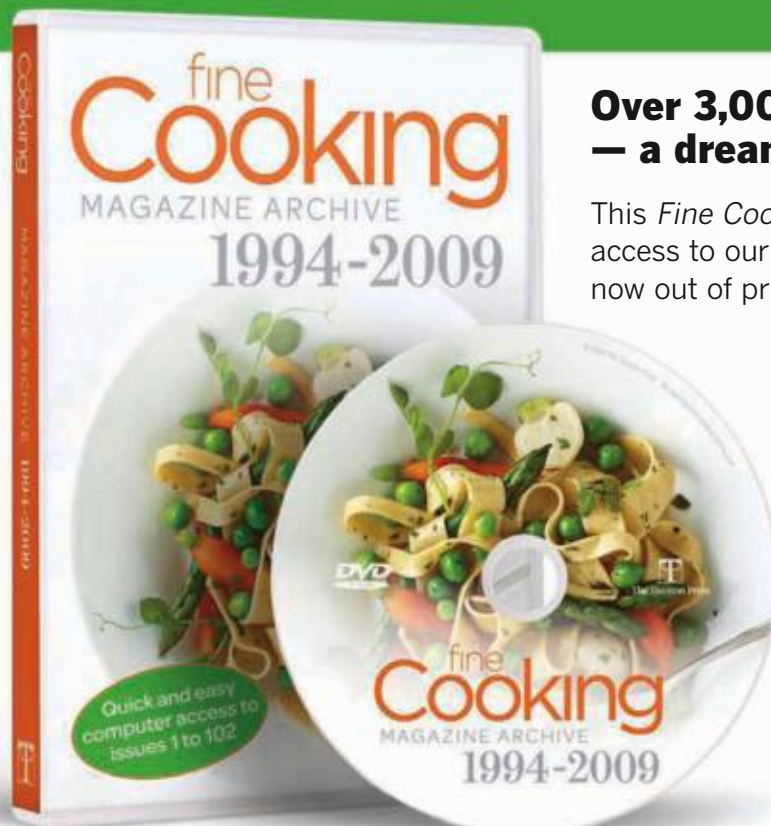
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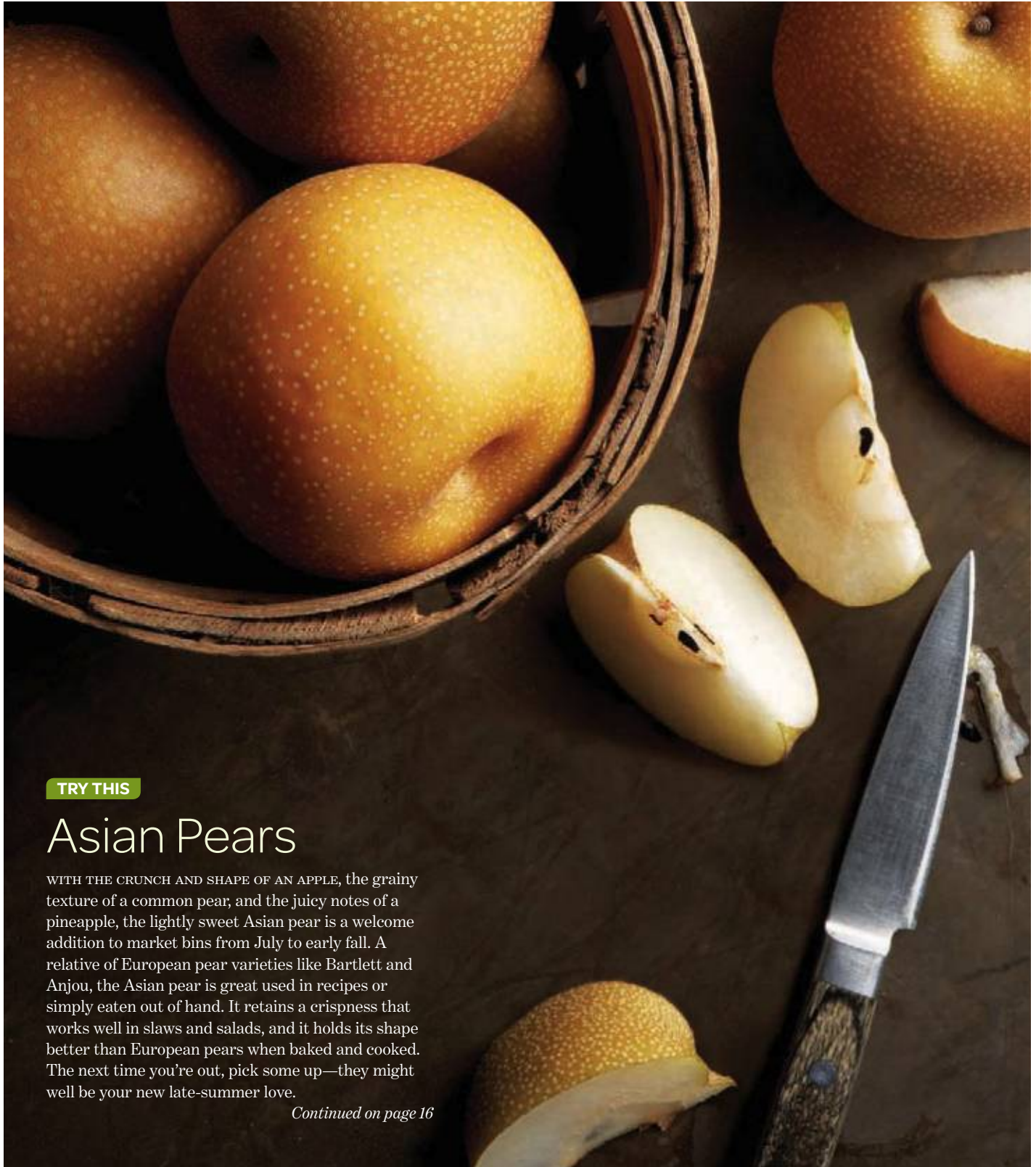
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MARKETPLACE

Shop Smarter, Eat Better



TRY THIS

Asian Pears

WITH THE CRUNCH AND SHAPE OF AN APPLE, the grainy texture of a common pear, and the juicy notes of a pineapple, the lightly sweet Asian pear is a welcome addition to market bins from July to early fall. A relative of European pear varieties like Bartlett and Anjou, the Asian pear is great used in recipes or simply eaten out of hand. It retains a crispness that works well in slaws and salads, and it holds its shape better than European pears when baked and cooked. The next time you're out, pick some up—they might well be your new late-summer love.

Continued on page 16

TRY THIS ASIAN PEARS

What they are

Asian pears originated in East Asia but are grown throughout the world today. The most common type in the United States is the Twentieth Century (or Nijisseiki). It's round and fat, with a slightly flat top and greenish skin that yellows as it ripens.

How to buy and store them

Asian pears are harvested at the peak of ripeness. They bruise easily, so they're usually sold in protective netting. Look for firm fruit (unlike their European counterparts, Asian pears don't soften when ripe), with few marks and a subtle floral aroma. Avoid pears that are shriveled or feel soft to the touch—they

shouldn't yield to slight pressure. They have a remarkable shelf life, lasting for up to four months in the refrigerator crisper drawer. At room temperature, they'll sit happily in a fruit bowl for two weeks without losing their crunch.

How to cook them

Asian pears have tender skin, so you don't need to peel them. Try them raw: Dice and add them to chicken salad; slice thinly and toss them with mixed lettuces, nuts, and vinaigrette; or julienne and add them to a slaw. They pair wonderfully with pungent cheeses like blue, Gouda, or Cabrales—simply slice the pears and serve with the cheese of your choice.

Although Asian pears have firm flesh, they're also extremely juicy and when cooked tend to give off more liquid than apples or pears do. Their mild flavor goes well with a variety of ingredients from the global pantry; pair them with ginger, star anise, soy sauce, five-spice powder, or even curry powder. We especially love them sautéed and served with pork, puréed in velvety soups, or for a special treat, infused with spices and honey as a warm, heady pancake and waffle topping. If you're lucky enough to score a great deal on Asian pears at the farmers' market, try this: Core the pears and slice them into eighths; then poach, can, and enjoy them for months to come.
—Evan Barbour



sesame steak salad with asian pears

Serves 4

- 1 lb. boneless beef strip steak
- 2 medium Asian pears (8 oz. each)
- 2 scallions, white parts minced, green parts sliced on the diagonal
- 2 large cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbs. minced fresh ginger
- ¼ cup mirin
- 3 Tbs. fresh lemon juice
- 2½ Tbs. reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1½ Tbs. Asian sesame oil
- 1 Tbs. plus 1 tsp. toasted sesame seeds
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 Tbs. rice vinegar
- 2 tsp. fish sauce
- 1 small head Boston lettuce, torn into bite-size pieces
- 1 small romaine heart, torn into bite-size pieces
- 4 large red radishes, thinly sliced
- ¼ medium seedless cucumber, halved and thinly sliced
- 1 Tbs. vegetable oil

Trim and freeze the steak until slightly firm, about 1 hour; this makes it easier to slice. Cut the steak crosswise into 4 pieces. Flip each piece onto a cut edge and slice across the grain ¼ inch thick.

Cut one of the pears in half. Peel and core one half and then grate it on the small holes of a box grater set in a medium bowl. Add the minced scallions, garlic, ginger, mirin, 2 Tbs. of the lemon juice, 2 Tbs. of the soy sauce, ½ Tbs. of the sesame oil, 1 tsp. of the sesame seeds, ¼ tsp. salt, and a few grinds of pepper. Add the beef and toss well. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes to 4 hours.

In a small bowl, whisk the rice vinegar and fish sauce with the remaining 1 Tbs. lemon juice, ½ Tbs. soy sauce, 1 Tbs. sesame oil, and 1 Tbs. sesame seeds.

In a medium bowl, toss the lettuces with 3 Tbs. of the dressing and a sprinkle of salt. Divide among 4 dinner plates. Core and thinly slice the remaining 1½ pears. Put the pears, radishes, and cucumber in the bowl and toss with the remaining dressing. Scatter over the lettuce.

Drain the beef and gently pat dry. Heat a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat until hot. Add the oil, swirl to coat the pan, and then scatter half of the beef evenly in the pan. Cook, flipping once, until the beef is nicely browned and barely cooked through, 1 to 2 minutes per side. Transfer to a bowl and repeat with the remaining beef.

Top the salads with the beef and any accumulated juices. Garnish with the remaining scallion greens and serve.

—Jennifer Armentrout



AT THE MARKET

What we're cooking now

Fine Cooking editors (and a reader) share some delicious ideas for in-season ingredients.



Mango Popsicles

In a blender, purée the flesh from a few ripe mangos with some plain yogurt, a pinch of ground cardamom, and sugar to taste. Freeze the purée in Popsicle molds.

—Samantha Seneviratne



Basil-Ginger Syrup

In a small saucepan, simmer 2 parts sugar (white or brown) and 1 part water. Add sliced fresh ginger and a large handful of torn fresh basil. Set the syrup aside to steep for an hour. Strain and chill. This syrup is delicious drizzled over fruit salad or in summery cocktails.

—Samantha Seneviratne

Greek Eggplant and Tomato Dip

Prick eggplant all over with a paring knife and rub with oil. Grill over a medium fire until collapsed, meltingly soft inside, and the skin is entirely charred. Skin the eggplant and chop the flesh. Mix with lemon juice, olive oil, chopped tomato, onion, parsley, oregano, and mint. Serve with pita wedges or chips.

—Jennifer Armentrout



Grilled Corn and Scallop Ceviche

Combine roughly chopped fresh sea scallops, minced red onion, finely chopped roasted red peppers, the kernels from a few ears of grilled corn, and the juice from half of a lemon, lime, orange, and grapefruit. Season with salt and pepper, then chill. Serve ice cold.

—Juli Roberts

Watermelon Relish

Combine small chunks of seeded watermelon with similarly sized chunks of peeled and seeded cucumber, finely sliced red onion, and some chopped mint. In a small bowl, whisk some white wine vinegar and sugar to taste. Pour over the watermelon mixture and toss well. Season with a sprinkle of salt, chill, and serve cold.

—Nadia Arumugam



Sautéed Green Beans with Soy Sauce

Heat some butter and olive oil in a skillet, add trimmed green beans and a pinch of salt, and cook until tender and well browned. Add a tablespoon or so of soy sauce and stir to coat. Remove from the skillet and serve.

—Lisa Waddle



ONE READER'S SEASONAL SPECIALTY

Grilled Peaches with Watermelon, Blueberries, and Mascarpone

Brush 4 halved and pitted peaches with vegetable oil and grill until lightly charred. Arrange on a platter with watermelon wedges and blueberries, then drizzle with mascarpone flavored with honey and lemon zest. Garnish with mint chiffonade and toasted almonds. —Denise Jones, Coronado, California





BIG BUY COOKING

Buffalo Mozzarella

Making the most of a favorite food find from a warehouse store.
BY MELISSA PELLEGRINO

IF THERE'S ONE CHEESE WE CAN'T RESIST, it's creamy buffalo mozzarella. Typically paired with a hefty price tag, buffalo mozzarella is a versatile ingredient you might not expect to find at the warehouse store. But we did—and at a great price. To take advantage of this first-rate find, we've created recipes for a layered eggplant, tomato, and mozzarella appetizer; a peach and mozzarella salad; and six crostini toppings that work deliciously with a layer of buffalo mozzarella. Try these, and you'll use up this stellar bargain buy in no time.

The Big Buy

What: Balls of fresh buffalo-milk mozzarella.

How much: 1-lb. tub of buffalo mozzarella in whey.

How to store: Keep any unused mozzarella in the refrigerator fully submerged in its liquid for up to one week.



MOZZARELLA AND...

6 Tasty Toppings for Crostini

With a mild taste that complements myriad flavors, buffalo mozzarella makes an ideal base for crostini toppings. Layer sliced mozzarella over 12 crostini and top with one of the following:

Herbed Peppers and Capers

Slice 1 roasted red and 1 roasted yellow pepper into ½-inch-wide strips. Toss with 1 Tbs. chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley, 2 tsp. chopped capers, and ½ Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil (shown above).

Caramelized Balsamic Onions

Cook sliced red onion in butter until deeply caramelized. Add balsamic vinegar and chopped fresh rosemary and continue to cook until syrupy.

Thyme-Roasted Tomatoes

Cut 8 Roma tomatoes in half lengthwise and remove the seeds. Put them on a rimmed baking sheet, drizzle with olive oil, and top each with a thyme sprig. Bake at 325°F until soft and collapsed but not dry, 2 to 3 hours. Coarsely chop and stir in ¼ cup diced black olives.

Grilled Baby Artichokes

Trim 6 baby artichokes and cut in half. Toss with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill over medium heat until lightly charred and tender. Thinly slice the artichokes lengthwise and toss with sliced fresh mint and basil.

Sautéed Mushrooms

Sauté an assortment of sliced mushrooms until tender, and then deglaze the pan with a little dry vermouth. Stir in chopped chives.

Charred Fennel

Toss ½-inch-thick wedges of fennel with olive oil. Grill over medium-high heat until lightly charred. Roughly chop, season to taste with salt and pepper, and stir in chopped fennel fronds.



eggplant, heirloom tomato, and buffalo mozzarella stacks

Mozzarella is great at soaking up flavors; in this recipe it's enlivened by olive oil infused with thyme, marjoram, and lemon. Serve as an appetizer or with a salad for a light lunch.

Serves 4

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 2 tsp. chopped fresh thyme**
- 1 tsp. chopped fresh marjoram**
- 1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest**
- Pinch crushed red pepper flakes (optional)**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 12 ¼-inch-thick slices heirloom tomatoes (from 3 to 4 medium)**
- 8 ¼-inch-thick slices eggplant (from 1 medium eggplant)**
- 2 balls buffalo mozzarella (5 to 7 oz. each), cut into 8 slices**

Prepare a medium-high gas or charcoal grill fire. In a medium bowl, mix the olive oil, thyme, marjoram, lemon zest, red pepper flakes (if using), ¼ tsp. salt, and ½ tsp. pepper.

Brush the tomato and eggplant slices with 1 Tbs. of the herb oil. Season with ¼ tsp. salt and a few grinds of pepper. Marinate the mozzarella in the remaining oil.

Grill the eggplant, flipping once, until nicely browned and tender, 2 to 3 minutes.

To serve, put a tomato slice on four plates. Top each with a slice of eggplant, then a slice of mozzarella. Repeat, ending with a tomato slice. Drizzle with any remaining oil and serve.

grilled peach and buffalo mozzarella salad

Reduced balsamic vinegar adds a tangy kick to peaches that are grilled to bring out their inherent sweetness. Be sure to choose nice, firm fruit; if the peaches are soft, they'll collapse on the grill.

Serves 4

- ¾ cup balsamic vinegar**
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 2 firm-ripe peaches (12 oz. total), halved and pitted**
- 4½ tsp. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 4 cups lightly packed baby arugula (about 2½ oz.)**
- 1 ball buffalo mozzarella (5 to 7 oz.), cut into ¾-inch chunks (about 1 cup)**

Prepare a medium gas or charcoal grill fire.

Combine the vinegar and thyme in a 2-quart saucepan and bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook until the mixture is thick, syrupy, and reduced to ¼ cup, 6 to 9 minutes. Remove from the heat, discard the thyme sprigs, and season with a pinch of salt and a few grinds of black pepper.

Rub the peaches all over with 2 tsp. of the oil and season lightly with salt and pepper. Grill cut side down until lightly charred, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board and let cool slightly. Slice each half into thirds.

In a medium bowl, toss the arugula with the remaining 2½ tsp. oil and season to taste with salt and pepper. Arrange on a platter. Top with the buffalo mozzarella and peaches and drizzle with about 2 Tbs. of the reduced balsamic, adding more to taste. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve.





PRESERVING THE SEASON

Tomatoes

Few things taste better than a fresh summer tomato. Capture and preserve that sun-ripened flavor in homemade tomato purée. **BY EUGENIA BONE**

RIPE SUMMER TOMATOES are one of the season's finest treasures. And now, while they're at their juicy, flavorful peak, is the time to enjoy—and preserve—they. One of the best ways to do just that is to make an unseasoned tomato purée that tastes worlds better than supermarket varieties.

It's easy: briefly cooked tomatoes are pressed through a food mill to remove the skins and seeds; the result is a sweet, clean-tasting tomato purée that can be used to make any number of sauces, soups, and other tomato-based dishes (see the box, opposite), ketchup chief among them. You can also can the purée and enjoy the taste of summer for months to come.

tomato purée

Depending on the water content of your tomatoes, this purée may be thinner than store-bought canned versions. You can use your homemade purée in any recipe calling for canned, but you may need to increase cooking time to evaporate the excess water.

Yields 5 to 6 pints

6 to 8 lb. ripe tomatoes, preferably a plum or paste tomato variety like San Marzano or Roma
Citric acid (if canning)

Wash the tomatoes and trim the stems. Coarsely chop the tomatoes, transfer to a 6-quart saucepan, and cook over medium heat until softened, about 10 minutes. Pass the tomatoes through a food mill, using the plate with the largest holes that still capture the seeds (for another option, see Test Kitchen, p. 89). Let cool; then refrigerate in nonreactive containers for up to 5 days or freeze for up to 1 year. You can also can the purée; follow the instructions opposite.

TOMATO KETCHUP

One of the best things about making your own tomato purée is that it easily becomes homemade ketchup, which is better-tasting and healthier for you than commercial ketchup.

Yields about 1 pint

1 1-inch-long cinnamon stick, crushed	5 cups Tomato Purée (recipe above)
1 tsp. celery seed	6 Tbs. chopped yellow onion
¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes	¼ cup granulated sugar
¼ tsp. whole cloves	½ tsp. kosher salt
¼ tsp. ground allspice	
6 Tbs. distilled white vinegar	

Enclose the cinnamon, celery seed, pepper flakes, cloves, and allspice in a tea ball or cheesecloth pouch secured with twine. Pour the vinegar into a 1-quart saucepan and add the spices. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat; then cover the pan and turn off the heat.

Put the tomato purée and onion in a heavy-duty 4-quart pot. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Lower the heat to medium low and simmer, stirring frequently to prevent scorching, until the onions are very soft and the flavors are melded, about 20 minutes. (If you want very smooth ketchup, you can pass the mixture through a food mill at this point to purée the onions.)

Remove the spices from the vinegar and add the vinegar to the tomato mixture. Add the sugar and salt and stir well. Continue to simmer until the ketchup is thick enough to spoon but still runny enough to pour, about 65 minutes. Cool to room temperature and then refrigerate. The ketchup will keep for about 2 weeks.

Canning Tomato Purée

Preserve your homemade fresh tomato purée by following these simple steps.



1 Have ready as many clean pint jars and bands as needed. Simmer new lids in a small saucepan to soften the rubberized flanges. Put ¼ tsp. citric acid in each jar. In a large saucepan, bring the purée to a boil over medium heat. Ladle the hot purée into the jars, leaving 1 inch of head-room **1**. Be sure there are no air bubbles in the jar (if there are, run a butter knife through



the purée). Wipe the rims, put on the lids, and screw on the bands fingertip tight.

Put the jars in a large pot fitted with a canning rack. Add enough water to cover the jars by 2 to 3 inches. Bring the water to a boil over high heat, then lower the heat to maintain a rolling boil **2**. Boil the jars for 40 minutes (plus 2 minutes for every 1,000 feet above sea level). Be sure the jars are



covered with water the entire time. Turn off the heat. Wait 5 minutes or so and then use a jar lifter to transfer the jars to a rack or towel and let cool **3**.

The purée may separate, with the pulp rising to the top of the jar and the translucent yellow juice dropping to the bottom—this is fine.

After about 8 hours, remove the bands and see if you can lift the jar by the lid **4**. If you can,



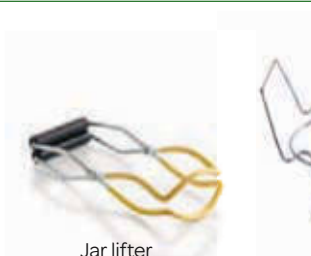
then the seal is tight; if not, refrigerate the jar and use within 10 days. Date the jars and store them in a cool, dry place. You do not need to store the jars with the bands on; the lid is enough. The purée will keep, unopened and at room temperature, for up to 1 year. After opening, it will keep in the refrigerator for up to 10 days. If separated, gently shake the jar to recombine.

Canning Tool Kit

To can tomatoes, you'll need citric acid, which lowers the pH of the tomatoes for safe canning, and a few special canning tools, at right. You can reuse jars and bands that are not chipped or dented, but always use new lids.



Jars, bands, and lids



Jar lifter



Canning rack

Citric acid

Pantry to Table

Keeping tomato purée on hand is like having money in the bank; it's a base that can add depth and flavor to all kinds of dishes. Here are four easy ways to use it.

Quick marinara sauce Sauté finely chopped onions and carrots in olive oil until soft, add tomato purée, and cook until flavorful and thickened. Blend with an immersion blender until smooth. Stir in minced fresh basil, a bit of butter, and salt and pepper to taste. Cook 10 more minutes and serve over pasta.

Fresh tomato soup Thin tomato purée with chicken broth and heat until simmering. Season with salt and pepper and drizzle with a good olive oil. Or add chopped, cooked chicken, fried tortilla strips, diced avocado, hot sauce, and minced fresh cilantro for a take on Mexican tortilla soup.

Tomato granita Put tomato purée in a shallow baking dish and season with fresh lemon juice, salt, pepper, and chopped fresh basil. Freeze, running the tines of a fork through the purée every couple of hours to break up any crystals that form. Serve as a refreshing starter or as a palate cleanser between courses.

Bloody Marys Add a bit of cold water to tomato purée, then stir in freshly grated horseradish, hot sauce, lemon juice, and vodka for a fresh brunch cocktail.

Eugenia Bone is a recipe developer, food writer, and the author of Well-Preserved.



MAKE IT TONIGHT

Just 30 minutes to dinner, start to finish



grilled shrimp salad with feta, tomato, and watermelon

Ripe, in-season ingredients are the key to this summery main-course salad, so use the best tomatoes and watermelon you can find.

Serves 4

- 1½ lb. raw extra-jumbo shrimp** (16 to 20 per lb.), peeled (leave tail segment intact) and deveined
- ¼ cup plus 2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice**
- 1 tsp. smoked sweet paprika**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1½ tsp. honey**
- Vegetable oil, for the grill**
- ½ medium head frisée, torn into bite-size pieces (4 cups)**

3 cups small-diced seedless watermelon (about 1 lb.)

3 medium ripe red or yellow tomatoes, cored and cut into wedges

2 cups yellow cherry or pear tomatoes, halved

6 oz. feta, cut into small dice (1¼ cups)

30 fresh basil leaves, thinly sliced (½ cup)

Prepare a hot gas or charcoal grill fire.

In a medium bowl, toss the shrimp with 2 Tbs. of the lemon juice and the paprika; marinate at room temperature for 5 minutes. Thread the shrimp onto metal skewers or wooden skewers that have been soaked in water for at least 30 minutes. Season the shrimp on both sides with ½ tsp. salt and ¼ tsp. pepper.

In a small bowl, combine the remaining ¼ cup lemon juice with the olive oil, honey, and a pinch each of salt and pepper. Whisk well.

Clean and oil the grill grates. Grill the shrimp, flipping once, until firm and opaque throughout, 4 to 6 minutes total.

In a large bowl, gently toss the frisée with 3 Tbs. of the dressing. In a medium bowl, gently toss the watermelon, tomatoes, feta, basil, 2 Tbs. dressing, ¼ tsp. salt, and ½ tsp. pepper. Divide the frisée among 4 plates and spoon one-quarter of the watermelon mixture over each. Top with the shrimp skewers, drizzle with the remaining dressing, and serve.

—Dina Cheney

frozen hot chocolate

This delicious cross between a milk shake and a slushie makes for a surprisingly refreshing (and easy) summertime dessert. You can add about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of chocolate or coffee liqueur for a boozy kick, if you like.

Serves 4

- 1 cup whole milk**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup heavy cream**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup natural unsweetened cocoa powder**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup packed light brown sugar**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. pure vanilla extract**
- Kosher salt**
- 2 cups ice cubes**
- 3 Tbs. bittersweet or semisweet chocolate shavings (made with a vegetable peeler)**

Blend the milk, cream, cocoa, sugar, vanilla, and a pinch of salt in a blender until well combined and the sugar is dissolved. Add the ice and blend just until slushy. Transfer to glasses, top with the chocolate shavings, and serve immediately with spoons. —*Lori Longbotham*



sirloin steaks with garlicky swiss chard

Sear the steak, and then finish it in the oven while you cook the chard. Serve with roasted potatoes or rice pilaf.

Serves 4

- 2 lb. sirloin steak, 1 inch thick**
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. dried rosemary, coarsely chopped**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup dry red wine, such as merlot**
- 4 large cloves garlic, minced**
- 2 Tbs. red wine vinegar**
- 1 tsp. granulated sugar**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. Dijon mustard**
- 2 large bunches Swiss chard (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. total), stems very thinly sliced and leaves roughly chopped**
- 2 oz. Pecorino Romano, thinly shaved with a vegetable peeler (1 cup; optional)**

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 400°F. Trim and cut the steak into 4 portions. Season the steaks all over with the rosemary, 2 tsp. salt, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. pepper.

Heat 1 Tbs. of the oil in a large (12-inch) skillet over medium-high heat. Working in 2 batches if necessary, arrange the steaks

in the skillet in a single layer and cook, turning once, until nicely browned, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Remove the skillet from the heat, transfer the steaks to a rimmed baking sheet, and roast until medium rare (130°F to 135°F), 4 to 6 minutes more. Set the steaks aside to rest.

Meanwhile, return the skillet to medium-high heat. Carefully add the wine and cook, scraping up any browned bits with a wooden spoon, until reduced by about half, 3 to 4 minutes.

Add the garlic to the skillet and cook until fragrant, about 10 seconds. Whisk in the vinegar, sugar, mustard, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. pepper. Drizzle in the remaining 3 Tbs. oil while whisking constantly.

Add the chard stems and cook, stirring occasionally, until beginning to soften, 5 minutes. Add the chard leaves in batches and cook, tossing, until the leaves are wilted enough to fit comfortably in the skillet, about 2 minutes. Cover the skillet and cook, tossing once or twice, until just tender, about 5 minutes.

Transfer the steaks to plates and top with the chard. Sprinkle with the Pecorino Romano, if using, and serve. —*Liz Pearson*



egg foo yung with chicken and shiitake

Serve this Chinese-American classic with bok choy sautéed with ginger and garlic.

Serves 4

- ½ lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast, trimmed and cut crosswise into ¼-inch strips**
- 1 Tbs. plus 1 tsp. soy sauce**
- 1 Tbs. Asian sesame oil**
- 6 large eggs, beaten**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 Tbs. oyster sauce (preferably Lee Kum Kee)**
- 1 tsp. white vinegar**
- ¼ cup canola or peanut oil**
- ½ red bell pepper, cored, seeded, and very thinly sliced**
- 6 scallions, trimmed and thinly sliced (white and 1 Tbs. green parts kept separate)**
- 3½ oz. fresh shiitake mushrooms, stemmed and thinly sliced**

In a large bowl, toss the chicken with 1 tsp. each of the soy sauce and sesame oil. In another large bowl, beat the eggs with ¼ tsp. salt, ½ tsp. pepper, and 1 tsp. of the sesame oil. In a small bowl, whisk the oyster sauce and vinegar with the remaining 1 Tbs. soy sauce and the remaining 1 tsp. sesame oil.

Heat 1 Tbs. of the canola oil in a large (12-inch) nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and cook, stirring, until it loses its raw color, 2 to 3 minutes; transfer to a plate. Add 1 Tbs. of canola oil, the bell pepper and scallion whites and cook, stirring, until the vegetables begin to brown, about 2 minutes. Add the shiitake, sprinkle with ½ tsp. salt, and cook until softened, about 2 minutes. Add the vegetables and chicken to the egg mixture and stir gently to combine.

Wipe out the skillet with paper towels. Heat the remaining 2 Tbs. oil over medium-high heat until shimmering hot. Add the egg mixture, reduce the heat to medium, and cook, running a spatula in short, circular motions along the bottom of the pan, until the eggs begin to set, 2 to 3 minutes. Reduce the heat to low and gently press on the eggs with the spatula to flatten them. Cook until the eggs are just firm to the touch, about 2 minutes. Set a large plate over the pan and flip the eggs onto the plate so the bottom faces up. Drizzle with the oyster sauce mixture, sprinkle with the scallion greens, and serve.

—Tony Rosenfeld



grilled bratwurst sandwiches with tomato jam and sauerkraut

Ripe tomatoes, vinegar, sugar, and fresh thyme make a tangy, jam-like condiment for these hearty sandwiches. If you don't have a grill, cook the bratwurst on a grill pan on the stovetop, or broil them.

Serves 4



- 3 medium ripe tomatoes (¾ to 1 lb.), cored and chopped**
- 1 Tbs. apple cider vinegar**
- 2 tsp. granulated sugar**
- 1 tsp. finely chopped fresh thyme**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- 4 uncooked bratwursts (about 1¼ lb.)**
- 4 hoagie sandwich rolls, split**
- 1 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- ½ tsp. cumin seed**
- 1 cup bagged sauerkraut, drained**
- ½ cup lower-salt chicken broth**

Prepare a medium gas or charcoal grill fire.

Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, combine the tomatoes, vinegar, sugar, thyme, ¼ tsp. salt, and ½ tsp. pepper. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, reduce the heat to medium, and simmer, stirring often, until most of

the liquid has evaporated and the mixture resembles a thick, chunky ketchup, about 20 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper; set aside.

Grill the sausages, turning occasionally, until cooked through and dark golden-brown all over, 10 to 15 minutes. During the last few minutes of cooking, toast the sandwich rolls on the grill, 30 seconds to 1 minute per side.

While the sausages are cooking, heat the oil and the cumin seed in a small saucepan over medium heat until fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the sauerkraut, broth, ¼ tsp. salt, and ½ tsp. pepper and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce the heat to medium low and simmer, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Spread the rolls with some of the tomato jam and then place a sausage inside each. Top the sausages with the sauerkraut and serve.

—Liz Pearson

thai-style spicy chicken in lettuce cups

This spicy ground-chicken dish is known as larb in Laos and Thailand. It's often served over lettuce, cabbage, or vegetables, with steamed sticky rice. We like to serve it in lettuce cups for an Asian take on tacos.

Serves 4

- 3 Tbs. uncooked jasmine rice
- 3 Tbs. fish sauce
- 1 stalk lemongrass, trimmed, outer layers removed, and inner core minced (1 Tbs.)
- 1 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- ½ tsp. packed light brown sugar
- 1¼ lb. ground chicken, preferably dark meat
- 1 medium shallot, minced (½ cup)
- 3 Tbs. fresh lime juice
- 3 medium scallions, thinly sliced on the diagonal
- 2 Tbs. coarsely chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 Tbs. coarsely chopped fresh mint
- 1 medium head butter lettuce, for serving

Toast the rice in an 8-inch skillet over medium-low heat, stirring frequently, until golden, 4 to 5 minutes (the rice will begin to smoke after a couple of minutes). Let the rice cool slightly and then grind in a spice grinder until the largest pieces resemble very coarse cornmeal; the mixture should not be completely powdery.

Combine the fish sauce, lemongrass, pepper flakes, brown sugar, and ½ cup water in a 12-inch nonstick skillet and bring to a simmer over high heat. Separate the chicken into large clumps and add to the pan. Cook, breaking up the chicken into small pieces with a wooden spoon, until the meat is no longer pink, 5 to 6 minutes. Sprinkle 1 Tbs. of the ground rice over the chicken and continue to cook, stirring frequently, until the liquid in the pan has thickened, about 2 minutes longer.

Remove from the heat. Stir in the shallot. Sprinkle with the lime juice, scallions, cilantro, and mint and stir gently to combine. Transfer to a serving dish and sprinkle with 1 tsp. of the remaining ground rice. Serve with the lettuce leaves on the side to use as cups for the chicken.

—Dawn Yanagihara



spicy grilled corn salad with black beans and queso fresco

Queso fresco, a mild white cheese popular in Latin American cuisines, has a feta-like texture and flavor that pairs well with the starchy corn and beans in this recipe.

Serves 6 to 8 as a side

- 3 ears fresh corn, husked
- 1 medium red onion, cut into disks about ½ inch thick
- 1 large red bell pepper
- ½ cup olive oil
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 small canned chipotle, seeded and minced, plus 1 Tbs. adobo sauce (from a can of chipotles in adobo)
- 2 Tbs. cider vinegar
- 1 15½-oz. can black beans, drained and rinsed
- 5 oz. queso fresco or feta, crumbled (1 cup)
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 Tbs. chopped fresh oregano

Prepare a medium charcoal or gas grill fire. Put the corn, onion, and pepper on a large rimmed baking sheet and brush with 2 Tbs. of the oil. Season with 1 tsp. salt and

½ tsp. pepper. Grill the corn and onion, flipping occasionally, until beginning to brown (the onions should still be a little crunchy), 6 to 10 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board to cool slightly. Grill the pepper until charred on all sides, about 12 minutes. Put the pepper in a bowl, cover, and cool slightly.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk the remaining 6 Tbs. oil, the chipotle and the adobo sauce, vinegar, 1 tsp. salt, and ½ tsp. pepper.

Coarsely chop the onion and put it in a large bowl. Cut the corn from the cobs and add to the bowl. Skin, seed, and coarsely chop the pepper; add to the bowl, along with the beans, cheese, cilantro, and oregano.

Rewhisk the dressing, add it to the corn mixture, and toss well. Season to taste with salt and pepper. (The salad may be made up to 1 day ahead. Refrigerate and return to room temperature, adding the fresh herbs just before serving.)

—Tony Rosenfeld

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pork chops with peach-ginger chutney

A serrated peeler makes quick work of peeling peaches. If you don't have one, blanch the peaches in boiling water for about 30 seconds and the skins should come off easily.

Serves 4

- 2 medium peaches (about $\frac{3}{4}$ lb.), peeled, pitted, and chopped
- 1 3-inch piece fresh ginger, peeled and cut into 4 thick coins
- 1 large shallot, chopped
- 2 tsp. granulated sugar
- 1 large sprig fresh thyme
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- $3\frac{3}{4}$ oz. ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) all-purpose flour
- 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch-thick boneless pork loin chops
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil

Combine the peaches, ginger, shallot, sugar, thyme sprig, a pinch each of salt and pepper, and 1 Tbs. water in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Cover, reduce the

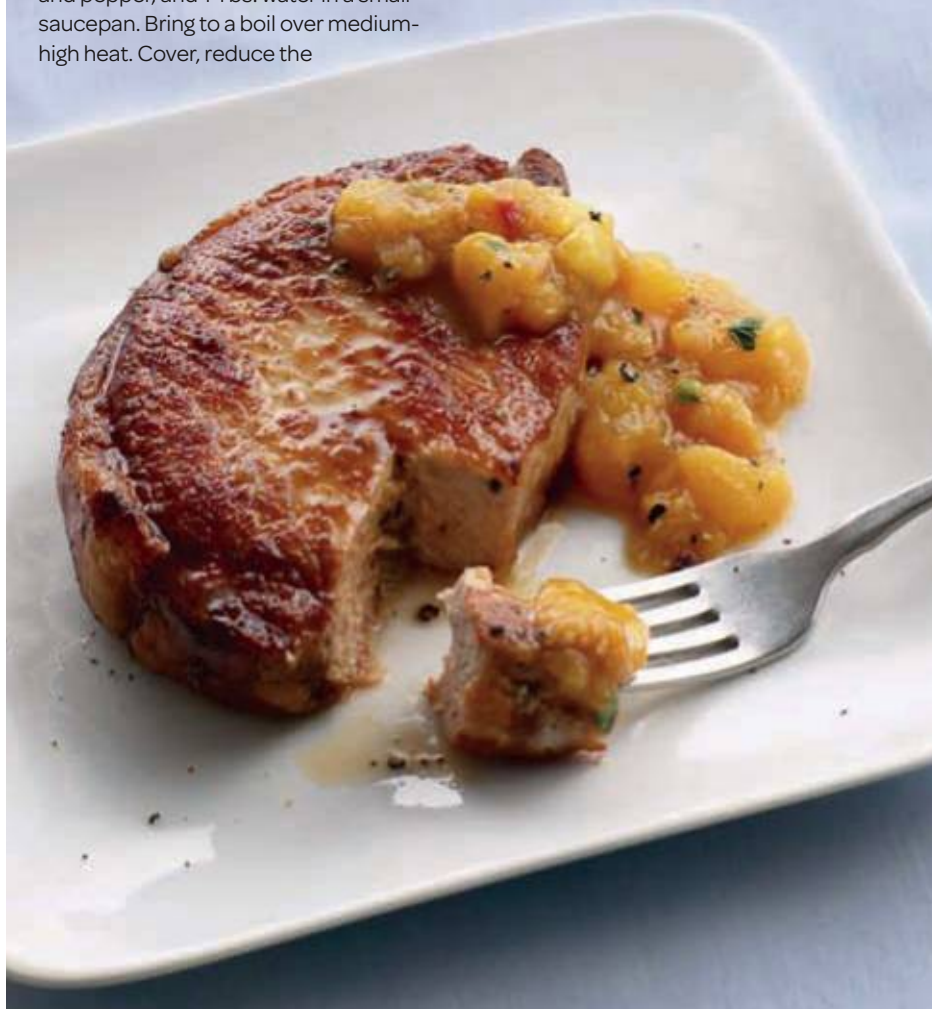
heat to low, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the peaches have collapsed and released their juices, about 20 minutes; discard the ginger and thyme sprig. Cover and set aside.

Meanwhile, combine the flour, 1 tsp. salt, and $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. pepper in a wide, shallow dish and stir to combine. Season the pork chops on both sides with salt and pepper. Dredge the chops in the flour mixture, shake off any excess, and transfer to a clean plate. Discard any remaining flour.

Heat the oil in a large (12-inch) skillet over medium heat. Arrange the pork chops in a single layer and cook, turning once, until deep golden-brown all over and cooked through, about 12 minutes total.

Mash the peach chutney with a potato masher until slightly chunky. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Transfer the pork chops to plates, top with the chutney, and serve. —Liz Pearson



ROAD TO POSITANO



SPAGHETTI



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Now I realize
IT'S JUST SOUTH OF SORRENTO.

We traveled through steep cliffs lined with lemon groves and grape vines until we reached Positano. In the middle of town we discovered a small restaurant bustling with activity. Intrigued, I asked the server how they'd become so popular. She smiled and pointed to a shelf filled with Barilla pasta.

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Barilla Spaghetti with clams

Ingredients

Barilla Spaghetti	1 box
Fresh little neck clams	Approx 50
Garlic	2 cloves
Red pepper flakes	1/2 tsp
Extra virgin olive oil	6 tbsp
Dry white wine	1/2 cup
Fresh Italian parsley	1/2 cup
Crushed tomatoes	1 28 oz can
Sea salt	To taste

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The Choice of Italy



DRINKS

Tiki Time

Showstopping tiki drinks are back on the menu, and they're causing quite a stir. Here's how to create these tasty cocktails at home—don't forget the swizzle sticks and umbrellas. **BY CAMPER ENGLISH**

SIPPING FROM OPPOSITE SIDES of a cocktail served in a hollowed-out pineapple, a young couple poses for a photo by a waterfall. This isn't a scene from a Hawaiian vacation in the 1960s, but one I observed earlier this year at Smuggler's Cove, a buzzing new San Francisco bar. This establishment, and the many others just like it springing up across the country, is a tiki lounge, serving classic Polynesian-themed cocktails. These once-out-of-favor joints and their kitschy cocktails, like the mai tai, zombie, and planter's punch, are making quite a comeback.

So what makes a cocktail a tiki cocktail? These drinks have several common characteristics. They often call for more than one kind of the same spirit. For example, the infamous zombie combines rum from three islands. Tiki drinks also balance several

juices, such as lime, grapefruit, and passion fruit. In addition, there is usually an exotic syrup or liqueur in the mix, such as falernum or orgeat. Finally, tiki drinks can have upwards of 10 ingredients (not including the multiple garnishes), compared with three or four for most other cocktails.

From the 1940s to the '70s, the tiki phenomenon was all the rage. But by the mid-'80s, these unashamedly garish drinks had developed a reputation as vehicles for cheap white rum and sickly sweet fruit punches. Still, beneath all the flower garnishes and flair lies a rich history and some of the most nuanced, complex, and delicious cocktails ever invented—and today's tiki aficionados are out to prove it.

Starry-eyed beginnings

The first tiki bar, Don the Beachcomber, was opened in Los Angeles in 1934, shortly after

the end of Prohibition, by Donn Beach. Soon after, Don the Beachcomber inspired what was to become the world's most famous tiki chain, Trader Vic's, which was started by Victor Bergeron in Oakland, California. Much like the cosmo and its starring role in *Sex and the City*, tiki drinks had some help from Hollywood. Both Donn's and Vic's bars were frequented by Charlie Chaplin and other celebrities of the day.

Like movie sets, tiki palaces were filled with a hodgepodge of South Seas-style decor, indoor rivers, palm trees, and bric-a-brac from various island cultures, partially supplied by (and appealing to) WWII veterans returning home from the Philippines and other tropical locations. Though the cocktails had no genuine Polynesian associations, they were wildly exotic and inspired creations—and their fans became legion.

Trouble in paradise

At the height of the tiki craze, to avoid losing customers to rival establishments, Donn and Vic became secretive about the drinks that had made them famous. New bar owners attempted to poach bartenders from them to gain access to the recipes; in turn, Donn and Vic protected their stakes by creating secret ingredients like Spices #2 and Don's Mix.



From left, Lift-Off!, Barbary Swizzle, Chi Chi Pache (recipes on page 30).

Such secrecy bred false imitation. As every tiki bar was expected to serve a zombie, mai tai, and scorpion bowl, copycat bar owners made their own versions, which often had nothing in common with the originals, except for the names. Imitation drinks abounded, quality went downhill, and customers soon forgot (or never knew) that tiki drinks were delicious—not merely oversize and overly garnished.

Glory days again

The tiki revival, which has really taken off in the last two years, has been fueled by both lovers of retro kitsch and of classic cocktails. These revivalists have created their own online community (tikicentral.com), started a tiki bar rating site (critiki.com), and organized annual conventions in several cities around the United States.

Joining them at the bar are the cocktail enthusiasts who live to research and recreate classic cocktails. Historians like author Jeff “Beachbum” Berry have studied lost recipes and hounded original Don the Beachcomber bartenders to learn the details behind the secret ingredients. Entrepreneurs like Blair “Trader Tiki” Reynolds are creating and selling ingredients specific to tiki drinks, including a recreation of Don’s Mix. Bar owners like “Shoeless” Martin Cate of Smuggler’s Cove are building exotic new hideaways in which to serve authentic tiki cocktails along with some modern updates, like the new drinks here.

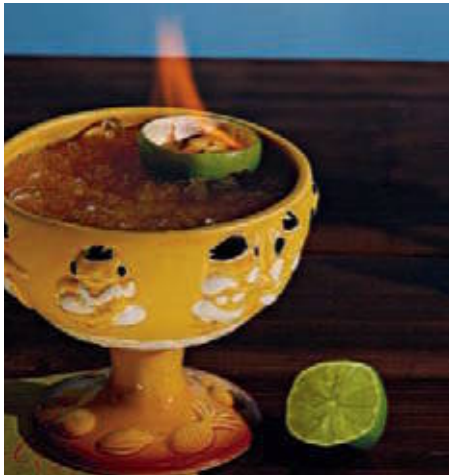
If these tiki advocates have anything to do with it, you’ll still enjoy the gloriously retro appeal of waterfalls, volcanos, and flower garnishes, but what you’ll take away (in addition to the paper umbrella, of course) is how delicious these cocktails truly are.

Continued on page 30

Flower Power

Tiki drinks are still served in ceramic volcano bowls and tiki mugs, garnished with orchids and oversize swizzle sticks, and set on fire. There’s a good reason for this: All the dark rum mixed with citrus juice makes most tiki drinks an unappetizing brown that’s best hidden beneath a garden of garnish.





lift-off!

This drink was invented by Blair Reynolds, bartender at Thatch Tiki Bar, in Portland, Oregon. Made with falernum, a syrup spiced with ginger and clove, it gets a fiery boost from a rum-soaked crouton set aflame inside the rim of a lime.

Serves 1

- 1½ fl. oz. (3 Tbs.) dark Jamaican rum, preferably Appleton Estate Extra
- ¾ fl. oz. (1½ Tbs.) 151-proof rum, preferably Lemon Hart Demerara
- ½ fl. oz. (1 Tbs.) fresh lime juice (save the juiced lime skin for garnish)
- ½ fl. oz. (1 Tbs.) fresh orange juice
- ½ fl. oz. (1 Tbs.) cinnamon syrup, preferably Trader Tiki's
- ¼ fl. oz. (½ Tbs.) falernum, preferably Fee Brothers
- 1 dash Angostura bitters
- Crushed ice (see Test Kitchen, p. 89)

FOR GARNISH

- 1 small plain crouton
- ½ fl. oz. (1 Tbs.) 151-proof rum
- 1 juiced lime half, scraped clean

Combine the rums, lime and orange juices, cinnamon syrup, falernum, and bitters in a 12-oz. double old-fashioned glass or a wide-mouth tiki mug with 1 cup of crushed ice. To garnish the drink, soak the crouton with the rum and put the crouton in the lime shell. Set the lime on top of the ice and set the crouton on fire with a long match or a lit wooden skewer. Serve with a straw, but be careful not to get it too close to the flame.

barbary swizzle

The drink's creator, Jeff "Beachbum" Berry, a cocktail historian and author of five tiki cocktail books, calls this brew a "cross-pollination of tiki with Morocco," since it fuses classic tiki ingredients with Moroccan mint tea.

Serves 1

- ¾ fl. oz. (1½ Tbs.) fresh lemon juice
- 1½ fl. oz. (3 Tbs.) Moroccan Mint Tea (recipe below)
- 1½ fl. oz. (3 Tbs.) gold Jamaican rum, preferably Appleton Estate V/X
- 1 tsp. dark Jamaican rum, preferably Appleton Estate Extra
- ¼ fl. oz. (½ Tbs.) club soda
- Crushed ice (see Test Kitchen, p. 89)
- 3 large mint sprigs

Pour the lemon juice, tea, rums, and soda into an 8- to 11-oz. Collins glass that's two-thirds full of crushed ice. Hold the handle of a swizzle stick, an upside-down wooden spoon, or bar spoon between your hands, sliding one hand back and forth to rotate the stirrer rapidly until the drink is chilled, about 10 seconds. Add more crushed ice to fill the glass and stir to mix. Garnish with the mint sprigs, julep-style.

MOROCCAN MINT TEA

Yields 2 cups (enough to make 10 drinks)

- 4 mint tea bags, preferably Numi brand Moroccan Mint
- ¾ cup granulated sugar

Steep the tea bags in 2 cups boiling hot water for 30 minutes. Discard the tea bags and stir in the sugar until dissolved.



chi chi pache

Created by Martin Cate of Smuggler's Cove in San Francisco, this drink is reminiscent of a creamy piña colada with a hint of spice.

Serves 1

- 2 fl. oz. (4 Tbs.) vodka
- 1½ fl. oz. (3 Tbs.) 100% pineapple juice, not from concentrate
- 1 fl. oz. (2 Tbs.) coconut cream, preferably Coco Lopez
- 1 tsp. pimento dram, preferably St. Elizabeth Allspice Dram
- 1 dash Angostura bitters
- Cracked ice (see Test Kitchen, p. 89)
- 1 cinnamon stick

Pour the vodka, pineapple juice, coconut cream, pimento dram, and bitters into an 18- to 20-oz. cocktail shaker filled with cracked ice. Shake lightly and strain into an 8- to 11-oz. Collins glass filled with more cracked ice. With a nutmeg grater, grate a little of the cinnamon stick over the drink. Garnish with the cinnamon stick.

Camper English is a San Francisco-based writer, blogger, and consultant who specializes in cocktails and spirits.



Check out our new Drinks blog at FineCooking.com.



BOOKS THAT COOK

The Reading List

New must-have reads for food lovers. BY KIMBERLY Y. MASIBAY

Hay Fever

How Chasing a Dream on a Vermont Farm Changed My Life

By Angela Miller with Ralph Gardner Jr.
(Wiley, \$25)

Angela Miller's memoir is a rousing tale of hard work and brave ambition. With great candor, she tells of her transformation from high-powered New York City literary agent to goat farmer extraordinaire. It all began with the innocent purchase of a 19th-century Vermont farmhouse. But Miller, not one to think small, promptly abandoned all notions of hobby farming and set her sights on building a world-class cheese company. Now, after just six years in business, her creamery, Consider Bardwell Farm, is crafting some of the best artisanal cheeses in the country. The book includes a smattering of delectable recipes to help quell the inevitable cheese cravings.

The Tex-Mex Grill

And Backyard Barbacoa Cookbook

By Robb Walsh

(Broadway Books, \$19)

Robb Walsh's cookbooks are never just about cooking. Sure, this foray into the smoky, spicy world of Tex-Mex offers everything you'd want in a summer cookbook: 85 approachable recipes, advice on building a backyard barbecue, and instructions on starting a fire and cooking over it. The book's real sizzle, however, comes from Walsh's intrepid reporting and inimitable storytelling. As he traces the history of outdoor cooking in Texas and northern Mexico, he zips across borders, gathering recipes from vaqueros, taqueros, and legendary restaurateurs. Walsh's most important lesson learned? When it comes

to grilling, there's no right or wrong as long as you're having fun and the food tastes good.

Wine Drinking for Inspired Thinking

Uncork Your Creative Juices

By Michael J. Gelb

(Running Press, \$20)

Much has been written about the physical health benefits of moderate wine consumption, but what can it do for the mind and soul? Creativity expert Michael J. Gelb plumbs that question in his new book. Part wine primer, part self-help guide, it covers all the enological basics—varietals, vintages, buying, storing, tasting, pairing, and so on—but Gelb's mindful approach sets his book apart from other appreciation guides. He weaves in references to great art and big ideas and offers creative exercises that elevate wine tasting from a flavor experience to an intellectual one. Whether you're looking to awaken your inner genius or to simply savor every sip, Gelb will get you there.

Good to the Grain

Baking with Whole-Grain Flours

By Kim Boyce with Amy Scattergood

(Stewart, Tabori & Chang, \$30)

The miracle of Kim Boyce's book is that it lets you forget the good-for-you aspect of whole grains. Boyce, who worked in the renowned pastry kitchens of Spago and Campanile in Los Angeles, takes bakeshop classics like carrot muffins, peach pie, currant scones, and chocolate chip cookies in new directions by incorporating quinoa, spelt, barley, rye, and other grain flours. This isn't about

what we're reading now

In *52 Loaves: One Man's Relentless Pursuit of Truth, Meaning, and a Perfect Crust* (Algonquin, \$24), we join author William Alexander as he bakes the same loaf weekly for a year in search of the perfect crust and crumb. In this odyssey, Alexander grows, harvests, threshes, and mills his own wheat before he gets anywhere near a mixing bowl. En route, we stop in Morocco, Paris, and New York, eat with monks, knead dough at a conference in Maine, and learn why something as basic as bread still enthralls the world.

—Nadia Arumugam, contributing editor



healthy baking—Boyce never shies away from butter, sugar, or cream; it's about discovering the incredible flavors and textures that whole-grain flours have to offer.

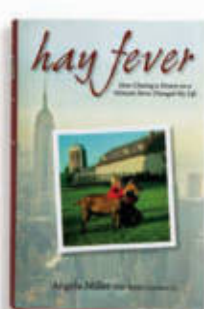
The Book of Tapas

By Simone and Inés Ortega

(Phaidon, \$40)

In this beautifully designed book, Spanish food luminaries Simone and Inés Ortega offer a collection of 250 authentic recipes for tasty nibbles, plus a visual dictionary of Spanish ingredients. It's impossible to page through without becoming desperately hungry. But mercifully, many tapas can be prepared without much ado from staple ingredients like bread, eggs, potatoes, and cured meats. From simple classics like Pan con Tomate (bread with tomato) to more ambitious Albóndigas (meatballs) and Empanadillas (little savory pastries), there are tempting options for cooks of every skill level. So choose a few, open a bottle of Spanish wine, and you've got a memorable meal to share with friends.

Kimberly Y. Masibay is a Fine Cooking contributing editor.





THE SCIENCE OF

Cooking Rice

The answer to a bowl of perfectly cooked grains isn't as elusive as you think.

BY DAVID JOACHIM AND ANDREW SCHLOSS

WE'VE COOKED RICE countless times and countless ways, but we still don't always get it right. We've rinsed it, soaked it, simmered it in carefully measured liquid, and boiled it in a large pot of water. We've cooked it with and without a lid, tried all shapes and sizes of pans, and even invested in specially designed rice cookers. Sometimes each grain is tender yet chewy, separate, and fluffy. Other times, the grains just clump together.

So how do we get our rice to behave and turn out exactly how we want it? Well, we've found the secret. Cooking rice perfectly is simply a matter of choosing the right variety and the right cooking method for the type of

dish you want to make. It's not rocket science, just a simple application of rice science.

Why isn't there a one-size-fits-all cooking method for rice?

There are myriad rice varieties, and each has a unique chemistry, starch content, shape, and size (such as long grain, medium grain, or short grain). These factors affect the amount of liquid required and the rate at which the rice cooks. The type of dish you're making also affects the cooking method. Different dishes—risotto, paella, rice pudding, plain steamed rice—call for different techniques to produce specific results.

It isn't quite the free-for-all it appears to be, though, because certain varieties of rice are best suited to certain preparations. For instance, cooks in India tend to use long-grain rice and boil it in plenty of water to create separate grains that remain perfectly intact. The Chinese use starchier medium-grain varieties so that the rice sticks together, making it easier to pick up with chopsticks. The Spanish also use starchy medium-grain varieties, but they cook the rice with stock instead of water and add meat, fish, and vegetables to make paella. Italians use even starchier rice and stir it during cooking to create creamy risotto (see the question at



right). And cooks in Thailand use very sticky short-grain rice (glutinous rice) to make rice pudding sweetened with coconut milk and topped with mango slices.

Why do some recipes call for soaking and/or rinsing rice and others don't?

When rice cooks, two things happen: Water gets absorbed into the grain, and heat softens the starch. Soaking rice speeds up the cooking by kick-starting the absorption of water before the rice even enters the pot. By letting rice soak for 30 minutes or so, you can reduce the cooking time of most rice varieties by about 20 percent.

Soaking rice can also affect the flavor of the finished dish. Acetylpyrroline, the flavor component in aromatic rice varieties (such as jasmine, basmati, wild pecan, Wehani, and Texmati) that is mainly responsible for their characteristic popcorn-like aroma, dissipates during cooking. The longer your rice is over

the heat, the less aromatic it will be. So by soaking the rice and shortening the cooking time, you get more flavorful results.

Rinsing rice, on the other hand, alters its texture when cooked. When you want perfectly separate grains, rinsing removes the thin layer of starch from the surface of each grain and helps keep the rice from sticking together. Long-grain rice, like basmati, is often rinsed for this reason.

The only types of rice that should not be rinsed are those that have been enriched. Vitamins and minerals are sprayed onto the surface of enriched rice to replace those lost during processing, and rinsing will wash a lot of these nutrients away. Most of the commercially milled white rice in the United States is enriched—check the label if you are unsure.

Why do you have to make risotto with Arborio rice, and why does it have to be stirred?

If you didn't use Arborio or another risotto rice, it wouldn't be risotto, because its defining characteristic is the texture of the rice. Risotto rice contains a high amount of a starch called amylopectin. The more amylopectin that's packed into the grains, the softer and creamier the rice becomes during cooking. Arborio, carnaroli, baldo, Roma, Vialone nano, and other risotto rices contain just the right amount of amylopectin to render the grains perfectly creamy on the surface yet chewy and al dente in the center. If you tried to make risotto with long-grain white rice, it would be too thin because of the lack of starch. And if you used a very

high-starch glutinous or sticky rice, the grains would entirely disintegrate, and you would end up with a thick, gloppy mass.

The right type of rice isn't the only factor in preparing a perfect risotto; it also depends on the way the rice is cooked. A risotto must be cooked without a lid and stirred throughout the cooking process. A large amount of cooking liquid, often a flavorful stock, is added in stages. Stirring roughs up the surface of the rice, releasing starch into the cooking liquid. The starch acts as a thickener and creates a creamy texture. And because risotto is cooked without a lid, the liquid evaporates and concentrates the flavors.

You may have come across recipes for baked risottos that boast a no-stirring method. In our opinion, these don't work. When you add all the stock at once and then cook the rice in the oven undisturbed, much less starch is released from the grains, as there is no friction from stirring to facilitate this process. The result is very little creaminess. Butter, cream, and cheese are often added in abundance to enhance and enrich the texture; however, the final risotto won't have the same velvety feel of one that's thickened with loosened starch from the rice.

David Joachim and Andrew Schloss are the authors of the award-winning reference book The Science of Good Food.



For a detailed chart on How to Cook Rice, including 14 varieties and 5 common cooking methods, go to FineCooking.com/extras.

Parboiled Rice, Uncovered

For all the rice varieties available at the grocery store, it's surprising how much shelf space is given over to parboiled rice. Also known as converted rice, parboiled rice has been pressure-steamed and then dried in its natural outer husk (which is later removed). This process hardens the starch in the grains so they remain firmer, less

sticky, and separate when cooked. It also forces the vitamins and minerals from the outer layer of the grains into the endosperm, which is the part we eat. This makes parboiled rice a more nutritious option than regular (unenriched) white rice, which doesn't retain any of the goodness of the nutrient-rich husk.



REPertoire

HOW TO MAKE

Fried Chicken

A southern staple for every cook's recipe collection. **BY PAM ANDERSON**

NOTHING SAYS SUMMER LIKE a picnic basket full of crunchy, juicy fried chicken. This southern favorite tastes so much better made from scratch than it does coming from a bucket, and it's surprisingly simple to prepare. Once the chicken pieces have been tenderized in a butter-milk marinade, they're tossed with seasoned flour in a paper bag for even coating and extra flavor. Next, in a large, deep, heavy skillet that

holds heat well (cast iron, if you have one), the chicken is pan-fried in hot oil—we use a deep fat/candy thermometer to ensure that the temperature is just right for a crunchy, golden crust.

Since the results are guaranteed to be finger-licking good, this may be the only fried chicken recipe you'll ever need.

Tool Kit

Have these kitchen essentials on hand before you start:

- Chef's knife
- Liquid measuring cup
- Measuring spoons
- Dry measuring cups
- Large mixing bowl
- Large doubled brown paper bag
- Large wire cooling rack
- Large rimmed baking sheet
- Heavy-duty 12-inch skillet (preferably cast-iron) with lid (you can use a baking sheet as a lid if necessary)
- Ruler (to measure oil depth)
- Deep fat/candy thermometer
- Tongs
- Instant-read thermometer

COOK'S TIP



Recycle Don't toss that frying oil—cool and strain out any crumbs and then refrigerate the oil in a large glass jar for up to six months. You can use it two or three more times.

Need to Know

Brown bag it Shaking the chicken in a paper bag with seasoned flour coats the parts evenly and keeps the mess to a minimum.

Fry once This recipe calls for a small chicken so that all of the pieces fit in a large skillet and fry in one batch. It's fine if the pan is crowded.

Partially cover Keep the chicken partially covered during the first half of frying; this helps maintain the oil temperature and holds in moisture so the chicken stays juicy and the coating gets crunchy.



Photographs by Scott Phillips; food styling by Samantha Seneviratne

classic fried chicken

Not only is it cheaper to buy a whole chicken than one sold in parts, but you can also use the neck, giblets, and back for Fried Chicken Gravy (go to FineCooking.com/extras for a recipe).

Serves 4 to 5

1½ cups buttermilk

Fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 whole small (3- to 3¼-lb.) chicken, cut into 10 pieces (see Test Kitchen, p. 89)

9 oz. (2 cups) unbleached all-purpose flour

1 Tbs. sweet paprika

2 to 3 cups vegetable oil

In a large bowl, mix the buttermilk with 2 tsp. sea salt and ½ tsp. pepper. Add the chicken and toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 and up to 24 hours, turning occasionally.

When you're ready to fry the chicken, put the flour, paprika, 2 tsp. sea salt, and ½ tsp. pepper in a large doubled brown paper bag, and shake to combine. Working in 2 batches, drop the chicken pieces into the flour mixture, fold the top of the bag closed, and shake to coat completely. Arrange the coated chicken on a large wire rack set over a large rimmed baking sheet. Discard the remaining flour mixture.

Pour enough oil into a deep heavy-duty 12-inch skillet (preferably cast iron) to reach a depth of ½ inch. Heat the oil over medium-high heat until a deep fat/candy thermometer clipped to the side of the skillet without touching the bottom registers 350°F.

Carefully arrange the chicken skin side down in the hot oil—it's fine if the pan is very crowded. The temperature will drop to about 300°F. Partially cover the skillet with a lid or a baking sheet, leaving the thermometer visible, and fry until golden-brown, about 5 minutes, adjusting the heat as needed to maintain 300°F to 325°F. If necessary, move the pieces around for even browning. Turn the chicken over and fry, uncovered, until browned all over and an instant-read thermometer registers 165°F when inserted into the thickest part of each piece, 5 to 7 minutes more.

Meanwhile, wash and dry the wire rack and baking sheet and set the rack over the sheet near the skillet. Using tongs, transfer the chicken to the rack to drain briefly. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Pam Anderson is a Fine Cooking contributing editor.



To see a video on cutting a whole chicken into pieces, go to FineCooking.com/extras.





TEST DRIVE

Blenders

The best blenders combine power, smarts, and bang for your buck. Here are our top picks. **BY NICKI PENDLETON WOOD**

LIKE A SWISS ARMY KNIFE, a blender is expected to do just about everything, from blending soups and sauces to making nut butters and mayonnaise. Fortunately, today's designs have kept up with the demanding cook and can accomplish more than ever. Some offer pre-programmed options to make the perfect smoothie, while others have serrated blades for quick ice-crushing. The best-designed blenders offer these new technologies in intuitive, easy-to-use formats and combine simple function with superior performance. Here are our favorites, across the price range.

\$
Hamilton Beach
Smooth Pour
\$45 at hamiltonbeach.com

The Smooth Pour is ideal for the consumer looking for a reliable blender with traditional functions. And while it comes in at under \$50, it's not entirely no-frills. Its innovative Wave-Action System pulls ingredients down into the blades for super-quick and super-smooth smoothies and soups. Its steel blades consistently smash cubes into cocktail ice. The 10 settings (plus high, low, and pulse) work for basic tasks like purées though aren't great at grinding coffee beans. Its 40-ounce glass pitcher is on the small side but has a well-designed spout that reduces drips. It comes with a three-year warranty.



\$\$
Breville Ikon
Hemisphere,
BBL550XL
\$150 at brevilleusa.com

The Ikon Hemisphere offers creative design and engineering. A cylindrical silhouette with a rounded pitcher bottom means food won't get trapped in corners. It has five settings (plus pulse). Its mix setting keeps hummus in blade range, producing a smooth purée in less than a minute, while its serrated blades are powerful enough to crush a half-pitcher of ice into snow in just 30 seconds. The 51-ounce glass pitcher is topped with a snug-fitting rubber lid that is easily removed using its convenient ring pull. The Ikon's flat buttons mean quick and easy cleaning. A one-year warranty is offered.



THE SPLURGE

Vitamix Professional Series 500

\$600 at surlatable.com

Professional chefs view the high price tag of their Vitamix blenders as an investment rather than an expense, and those who look for restaurant-grade kitchen equipment will, too. With stainless-steel, laser-cut blades, a powerful motor, and a durable 64-ounce polycarbonate pitcher, this blender is up for any kitchen challenge. It chops nuts into uniform bits with just three pulses, incorporates entire parsley stems into thick hummus, and purées sesame seeds. But while more power is good, control is even better. A single dial controls the Vita-

mix's ten speeds and various cycles. Its pulse option slows any setting, preventing the overflow of hot liquid and keeping thick mixtures in contact with the blades. Using a combination of settings to make a smoothie, the motor begins slowly, speeds up to medium, and finishes at high speed to produce a velvety drink. Another great feature? The Vitamix heats food, too. When it's set to the hot-soup option, the blades create enough friction to warm purées to serving temperature. A full seven-year warranty is offered.



\$\$\$

Cuisinart

PowerEdge 700

\$270 at macys.com

With fewer but “smarter” buttons that coincide with common kitchen tasks, Cuisinart's PowerEdge consistently delivers superb performance. Timed settings create perfect cocktail ice and smoothies: The ice crush function pulses on and off automatically for ideal texture, while the smoothie program switches off after 30 seconds. The blender has four settings (plus high, low, and pulse), with a high setting powerful enough to grind coffee beans to espresso powder in 25 seconds, and a low setting that keeps thick mixtures in contact with the blades. At 56 ounces, the blender's glass pitcher is bigger than most and comes with a well-designed, removable, die-cast base. It has a three-year warranty.



Photographs by Scott Phillips

What to Consider

Cycles and Speeds Choose a blender with the right speeds—more isn't necessarily better. Low speeds and pulse settings are useful for keeping ingredients within blades' reach. Multispeed cycles offer combinations of slow speeds, pulses, pauses, and high speeds.

Cleanup Flat control panels mean fewer crevices for debris to fall into. Wide-bottom pitchers easily accommodate spatulas and sponges for cleaning and do away with the need to disassemble the blade from the bottom of the pitcher.

Capacity Forty ounces is a standard-size blender pitcher. Those that are more than 50 ounces can purée a large amount of soup all at once and hold enough daiquiris for a crowd.

Construction Die casting, quality materials, and long warranties likely mean greater durability. Stability at high speeds and a pitcher that fits smoothly into its base are important as well.

Safety Timers and programmed cycles prevent overprocessing. Master switches are good at heading off accidental geysers and thwarting button-pushing toddlers.

Durability Glass pitchers have a reassuring heft and resist scratches, stains, and odors. Plastic pitchers pour more cleanly than glass and are lighter but can scar when processing hard ingredients and cloud with long use.

How We Tested

We selected 14 full-size, multispeed countertop blenders and evaluated their power, versatility, construction, features, and speeds. To do so, we put them through the following tests:

- We crushed ice and made smoothies from frozen berries to test the relative power of each blender and to assess whether frozen foods damaged or dulled the blades.
- By puréeing hummus with whole sesame seeds, we gauged how smooth and consistent a paste each blender could produce.
- We put coffee beans and nuts to the test to determine how finely each blender could grind.

Nicki Pendleton Wood is a cookbook editor and equipment tester who lives in Nashville.

The Smart Sandwich

Three delicious strategies for packing an inspiring and healthful lunch. **BY ELLIE KRIEGER**

WHEN MY DAUGHTER WAS A TODDLER, I wouldn't dream of leaving the house without a selection of healthful snacks. Of course, I'd pack nothing for myself and wind up begging to share her bag of Cheerios, but eventually I wised up and began to include a little something for me, too. Now that my daughter is in grade school and the portable food focus is on lunch, I haven't forgotten that valuable lesson. When I pack her lunch box, I pack one for myself as well. I'm amazed at how much return there is on this small investment of effort.

When I have lunch with me, I eat healthier portions of better-quality food. Plus, it's ready to eat, and I save money. Nutritional studies back up the bring-it-with-you benefits: When we eat out or order in, we end up consuming more of the stuff we don't need, like calories, fat, and sodium, and less of what we do need, like nutrients and fiber. Preparing your own food means you eat more healthfully without even thinking about it.

If you do think about it, even better. That's why lately I've been pondering sandwiches—the quintessential lunch box item—and what makes one that's both tasty and optimally healthy. The result: three smart sandwich strategies and one fabulous Greek salad pita recipe (opposite) that pulls them all together.

STRATEGY #1

Choose the right bread

Years ago, a sandwich usually included two modest slices of bread. Now, many rolls, bagels, and wraps are so oversized that they weigh as much as four standard bread slices. To keep carb portions smart, aim for 2 ounces of bread (56 grams; the nutrition label gives you the weight of a serving) and make it whole grain for its fiber, antioxidants, and nutty taste. This generally translates to two slices of sandwich bread, a 6-inch pita, or a 9-inch wrap (pitas and wraps are great for stuffing with vegetables; see strategy #3). Scooping out the center of a crusty baguette or roll is another way to cut down on bread and fit more healthy fillings in your sandwich.

STRATEGY #2

Spread the wealth

Get yourself out of a mayo rut by exploring condiments that are both flavorful and healthful. Try slathering on an herb or sun-dried tomato pesto, a spread of buttery-ripe mashed avocado, or some rich, creamy hummus.

(Not only are these delicious, but you also get the benefits of their monounsaturated fats and vital nutrients.) The olive-garlic tapenade for the sandwich opposite also works wonders in a simple turkey or tuna salad sandwich. Or try mixing two parts Dijon mustard with one part honey for a sweet-tangy low-calorie spread.

STRATEGY #3

Amp up the vegetables

That go-to lettuce leaf and slice of tomato is fine, but you can do so much better. Try grilled vegetables (like zucchini, eggplant, fennel, peppers, onions, and tomatoes), interesting greens (watercress, arugula, and frisée), or even veggies you might not think of for a sandwich (steamed asparagus and green beans; sliced radishes, red onion, and cooked beets; shredded carrot and cabbage; raw snow peas). Toss them with a touch of fruity olive oil, lemon juice or good-quality vinegar, some fresh herbs, and a little salt and pepper, and you can take these vegetables from good to great.

With these three strategies—choosing the right bread, a better spread, and lots of veggies—you'll build tastier, healthier sandwiches. After all, just because you're out of grade school doesn't mean you don't need a good lunch. In fact, when my daughter gets her spiffy new lunch box this month, I may just pick up one for myself.



“When I have lunch with me, I eat healthier portions of better-quality food. Plus, it’s ready to eat, and I save money.”



greek salad pitas with olive-garlic tapenade

If you're packing these sandwiches to go, put the salad mixture in a container and add it to the pitas just before eating so they don't get soggy.

Yields 4 sandwiches

FOR THE TAPENADE

- 1** medium clove garlic
- ½** cup pitted Kalamata olives
- 1** Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1½** tsp. red wine vinegar

FOR THE SANDWICH

- 1½** cups seeded and finely diced English cucumber (about ½ medium)
- 1¼** cups seeded and finely diced Roma tomatoes (about 3 medium)
- ¾** cup crumbled feta
- ½** cup finely diced radishes (about 4 medium)
- 2** Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1** Tbs. red wine vinegar
- 1** tsp. dried oregano
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 4** medium (6- to 7-inch) whole-wheat pitas, warmed
- 4** cups lightly packed baby spinach leaves

MAKE THE TAPENADE

Put the garlic in a food processor and process until chopped. Add the olives, olive oil, and vinegar and process until spreadable but not completely smooth.

ASSEMBLE THE SANDWICH

In a large bowl, combine the cucumber, tomatoes, feta, and radishes. Add the olive oil, vinegar, oregano, and a few grinds of pepper and toss to combine.

Slice the pitas in half and open the pockets. Divide the tapenade among the pitas, spreading it evenly inside each. Stuff each pita half with about ½ cup of the spinach and ½ cup of the salad mixture and serve.

Registered dietitian Ellie Krieger is a Fine Cooking contributing editor.

Good to Know

Five sandwiches put the three strategies at left to work:

Italian Spread a scooped-out baguette with sun-dried tomato pesto; layer on sliced tomato, grilled eggplant, arugula, and fresh mozzarella.

Californian Spread mashed avocado in a pita; add sliced roasted turkey breast, sliced radishes, shredded carrot, and butter lettuce.

German Spread honey mustard on a wrap; add sliced ham, beets, watercress, and cornichons.

Niçoise Spread olive tapenade (see the recipe at right) on a scooped-out baguette; add tuna salad made with lemon juice and olive oil, and layer on sliced hard-cooked egg, tomatoes, red onion, and green beans.

Mediterranean Spread hummus in a pita; add grilled zucchini, peppers, fennel, and onions; finish with a sprinkle of pine nuts.

Bites for a Midsummer Night

A new spin on the cocktail party, inspired by Portuguese small plates. **BY DAVID LEITE**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOHN KERNICK

A LONG HOT SUMMER NIGHT is a great excuse for a party. There should be wine, candles, a sultry playlist, and a menu of dishes that mix and match for a light but satisfying meal, one that takes shape with the evening and flows with the conversation. Like the small plates here.

In Portugal, these little dishes are called *acepipes*. They're similar to tapas, but they're not tapas; they're far more interesting. Potato skin curls (fried strips of potato skin tossed with fresh herbs) and salt cod fritters (potato-crab-cod nuggets) are irresistible. A green olive spread is reminiscent of an indulgent mayonnaise-like dip, though it contains no eggs. Gazpacho makes an appearance, but in shot glasses garnished with frozen cucumber slices and tomato juice ice cubes. There are homemade pickled onions and flame-blistered chunks of sausage. Together, these Portuguese nibbles make a great spread, one that is easily replenished over the course of the evening. Keep the food coming, keep the bar stocked (for wine recommendations, see page 42), and it's sure to be a *festa* to remember.

Menu for Twelve

Salt Cod and Crab Fritters
Fireman's Sausage
Spicy Pickled Onions
Cheese Plate
Warm Marinated Olives
Green Olive Spread
Gazpacho Coolers
Potato Skin Curls with Fresh Herbs
Pine Nut and Orange Cookies







salt cod and crab fritters

You can prepare the fritters ahead and then fry them when you're ready to eat. Save the potato skins for the Potato Skin Curls with Fresh Herbs on p. 46

Yields about 36 fritters

- 8 oz. dried salt cod** (see Test Kitchen, p. 89, for more information)
- 1 lb. medium Yukon Gold potatoes (3 or 4), peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces**
- Kosher salt**
- 3 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 medium yellow onion, minced**
- 3 medium cloves garlic, minced**
- 3 Tbs. finely chopped fresh cilantro**
- 1 tsp. hot pepper sauce; more to taste**
- 1 large egg, separated**
- 8 oz. jumbo lump crabmeat, drained well and picked over**
- Vegetable oil, for frying**

The day before you plan to serve the fritters, rinse the salt cod well under cool running water to remove any surface salt. Put it in a large bowl and cover with cold water. Cover the bowl and refrigerate for 24 hours, changing the water several times.

Bring a 4-quart saucepan filled with enough water to accommodate the cod (about 3 quarts) to a boil over high heat. Reduce the heat to low, add the soaked cod, and simmer gently until it flakes easily with a fork, 10 to 20 minutes. Drain well and let cool. Remove and discard any bits of skin, bone, or spongy ends.

Meanwhile, put the potatoes in a 4-quart saucepan and add enough cold water to cover by 2 inches. Add 1 Tbs. salt, cover, and bring to a boil over high heat. Simmer until tender, 10 to 12 minutes. Drain, transfer to a bowl, and mash well. Set aside.

In a 10-inch skillet, heat the olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring often, until golden brown, 4 to 7 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute more. Add to the mashed potatoes.

Pulse the cooked cod in a food processor until finely shredded. Add the cod to the potatoes, along with the cilantro and hot sauce. Mix well and season to taste with salt and more hot pepper sauce. Stir in the egg yolk and then gently fold in the crab. In a small bowl, whisk the egg white to soft peaks and gently fold it into the cod mixture.

Pinch off walnut-size pieces of the cod mixture, roll them into balls, and set aside on a tray. (The recipe may be prepared up to this point 2 hours ahead; keep refrigerated.)

Heat 1½ inches of vegetable oil in a 4-quart saucepan over medium-high heat until it reaches 360°F on a deep fat/candy thermometer. Fry the fritters in batches of 4 or 5 until golden-brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a baking sheet lined with paper towels to drain. Sprinkle with salt while still sizzling. Serve warm or at room temperature.

What to Drink

Stock the bar with a selection of Portuguese wines that go with the mix of dishes in this menu.

Vinho Verde For a refreshing (and very affordable) white, try the light and fruity Aveleda Fonte Vinho Verde or crisp, medium-dry Aliança Vinho Verde.

Vinho do Dão For a red, the spicy Quinta de Cabriz Tinto stands up well to the strong flavors here, as would the bold Quinta das Maias Tinto, with its rich dark-fruit notes.

White Port The bright, pale-gold Fonseca Siroco or the slightly drier Ramos Pinto makes an elegant, easy-drinking choice. Serve chilled in a small 6- to 9-oz. port glass with a wide bowl and a slender rim. Enjoy it straight or poured over ice, and brightened with a lemon twist. For a simple cocktail, try it blended with an equal part of tonic.





fireman's sausage

Serve this punchy sausage with crusty bread, or for an unexpected pairing, sweet fresh pineapple chunks. See Test Kitchen, p. 89, for flambéing tips.

Yields 5 to 6 cups

- 1½ to 2 lb. dry-cured Portuguese chouriço, linguíça, or Spanish chorizo**
- 1 cup grappa or brandy**

Put the sausages in a 12-inch skillet (cut them to fit if necessary). Cook over medium-high heat, flipping once, until lightly browned on two sides, 8 to 10 minutes total. Take the skillet off the heat and carefully add the grappa. Return the skillet to medium-high heat. Using a long-handled grill lighter or a lit match, carefully ignite the grappa. Let the flames blister and char the sausage skins; turn the sausages once with tongs. When the flames burn out (after about 2 minutes), move the sausages to a cutting board and slice thinly on the diagonal. Transfer to a serving dish and drizzle with the liquor from the skillet. Serve with toothpicks.

spicy pickled onions

These onions are a great addition to a cheese plate. Make them at least 5 days before serving to allow the flavors to develop.

Yields about 1 quart

- ¾ lb. (3 to 3½ cups) fresh or frozen small white or yellow pearl onions (½ to ¾ inch in diameter)**
- 1½ cups white wine vinegar**
- 6 medium cloves garlic**
- 5 whole allspice berries**
- 1 Tbs. granulated sugar**
- 1 dried bay leaf**
- 1 1-inch piece of ginger, peeled and sliced into ¼-inch slices**
- 2 whole cloves**
- 1 small fresh hot red chile, such as cayenne or piquin, stemmed, or a large pinch of crushed red pepper flakes**
- Kosher salt**

If using fresh onions, have a bowl of ice water at the ready. Bring a medium saucepan of water to a boil over high heat. Add the onions and blanch until tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer them to the ice bath and let cool. To peel, snip off the tip with kitchen scissors and remove the papery outer layers. Set the onions aside.

If using frozen onions, thaw them.

Pack the onions into a clean 1-quart glass jar. In a 3-quart saucepan over high heat, bring ½ cup water and the vinegar, garlic, allspice, sugar, bay leaf, ginger, cloves, chile, and a pinch of salt to a boil. Lower the heat to maintain a simmer and simmer for 5 minutes to let the flavors blend.

Carefully ladle the vinegar mixture over the onions in the jar. Let cool to room temperature, then cover with the lid. Refrigerate for at least 5 days to let the flavors develop. The onions will keep for up to 2 months in the refrigerator.



warm marinated olives

Turkish bay leaves have a more complex, well-rounded flavor than the domestic variety. Here, they add a subtle, sweet astringency to a combination of green and black olives.

Yields 2 cups

- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 medium cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
- 4 3x1-inch strips orange zest
- 3 3x1-inch strips lemon zest
- 1 Tbs. fresh rosemary leaves
- 1 large or 2 small dried Turkish bay leaves
- Pinch of crushed red pepper flakes
- Generous pinch of ground allspice
- 1 cup pitted brined green olives, preferably picholine
- 1 cup pitted brined black olives, preferably Kalamata

Heat the oil and garlic in a 2-quart saucepan over medium-low heat until the garlic turns golden, about 3 minutes. Add the orange and lemon zests, the rosemary, bay leaves, red pepper flakes, and allspice and sizzle for 2 minutes more, stirring occasionally. Add the olives and toss to coat. Transfer to a bowl to cool, then cover and refrigerate, stirring occasionally, for at least 2 days and up to 1 week.

Just before serving, gently reheat the olive mixture in a small saucepan over low heat until warmed through, 2 to 3 minutes. Scoop the olives and aromatics into a serving bowl and pour a bit of the oil on top. Serve warm.



The Cheese Plate








Use this guide to select cheeses that complement one another. For an authentic touch, try the Portuguese suggestions and serve them with the pickled onions (page 43).

A hard cow's milk cheese Opt for a full-flavored, tangy Cheddar-like choice with peppery undertones, such as São Jorge.

A soft goat cheese A yielding goat cheese, like the rustic Gardunha, makes a great addition to the plate. Made with thistle flower—a naturally occurring vegetal rennet—Gardunha has an earthy, robust flavor.

A semi-hard sheep's milk cheese A mild sheep's milk cheese, such as the lemony Évora, balances more robust choices. With a light yellow color, Évora is reminiscent of a fresh olive oil.

The Party Plan

5 DAYS–2 MONTHS AHEAD	2–7 DAYS AHEAD	UP TO 3 DAYS AHEAD	1 DAY AHEAD	UP TO 2 HOURS AHEAD	15 MINUTES AHEAD	BEFORE YOU SERVE
						
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the pickled onions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the marinated olives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the base for the olive spread. • Make the cookies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soak the salt cod for the fritters. • Make the gazpacho. Freeze the cucumber slices and make the tomato juice ice cubes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pare the potato skins. • Prepare the salt cod and crab fritters. • Arrange the cheese plate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm the olives. • Toast the baguette for the olive spread. • Finish the olive spread. • Fry the salt cod and crab fritters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the Fireman's Sausage. • Pour the gazpacho into chilled cups and garnish. • Make the potato skin curls.



green olive spread

What makes this spread such a marvel is its “milk mayonnaise” base, an eggless emulsion of milk and vegetable oil. It creates a luscious, neutral canvas, allowing the flavor of the olives to take center stage. You can make the base of the spread 3 days ahead and stir in the olives when ready to serve.

Yields about 2 cups

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup whole milk; more if needed**
- 12 large oil-packed anchovy fillets**
- 2 small cloves garlic, smashed**
- 16 fresh cilantro sprigs, coarsely chopped**
- Freshly ground white pepper**
- 1½ cups vegetable oil**
- 1½ cups pitted brined green olives, rinsed if particularly salty, coarsely chopped**
- 1 baguette, sliced $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick and toasted**

Purée the milk, anchovies, garlic, cilantro, and a pinch of pepper in a blender. With the motor running, slowly pour the oil through the feed hole in the blender cap.

Scoop the spread into a serving bowl, cover with plastic, and refrigerate until ready to serve, up to 3 days. Just before serving, stir in the olives. The spread will thicken a bit more when the olives are added. If it thickens too much, thin it with a bit of milk.

Serve with the toasted baguette slices.



Setting the Scene

In Portugal, these small plates, or *acepipes*, are laid out altogether on a single large table. The point is to make the spread feel as abundant as you can. Fill in any empty spaces with small bowls of the marinated olives (page 44), platters of

cheese, pickled onions (page 43), and bread. There’s no need to pass around the nibbles; instead, have a stack of small plates nearby and invite your guests to help themselves.



gazpacho coolers

On a particularly hot day in Portugal, a single ice cube is often added to a bowl of gazpacho for cool relief. Here, a tomato juice ice cube and a frozen cucumber slice do the same, in style.

Yields about 1 quart

- 2½ cups rustic bread pieces (torn by hand)**
- 2½ lb. very ripe tomatoes, cored, seeded, and chopped (5 cups)**
- 1 medium English cucumber, peeled and sliced ¼ inch thick (2 cups)**
- 1 medium red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and chopped (1 cup)**
- 2 medium cloves garlic, crushed**
- 1 tsp. fresh oregano**
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1½ Tbs. white wine vinegar**
- 1¼ cups tomato juice**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

Working in batches if necessary, pulse the bread, tomatoes, half of the cucumber slices, bell pepper, garlic, and oregano in a blender or food processor until smooth. Add the oil, vinegar, and ¾ cup water and pulse again. Pass the soup through a fine sieve into a large bowl, pushing on the solids with the back of a ladle to extract as much of the liquid as possible.

Cover with plastic, and refrigerate until very cold, at least 4 hours and up to overnight. Meanwhile, arrange the remaining cucumber slices on a baking sheet lined with a nonstick baking mat or waxed paper and freeze. Fill an ice cube tray with the tomato juice and freeze.

When ready to serve, season the gazpacho to taste with salt and pepper. Pour it into small chilled cups and add a frozen tomato juice cube and a frozen slice of cucumber.

potato skin curls with fresh herbs

These crisp shards of potato skin are cooked in oil infused with the season's freshest herbs, so every bite delivers a taste of summer. The longer you leave the oil to infuse, the more intense the flavors. You'll need only the potato skins for this recipe; save the flesh for the Salt Cod and Crab Fritters on p. 42. Any remaining peeled potatoes will keep in the refrigerator, covered with water, for 2 days. You may want to use them to make a potato salad (see p. 76).

Yields about 7 cups

- 3 cups canola oil**
- 1¼ cups coarsely chopped mixed fresh herbs, such as rosemary, parsley, cilantro, oregano, marjoram, and summer savory**
- 5 lb. medium Yukon Gold potatoes, washed and dried well**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

In a 4-quart saucepan, combine the oil and ¾ cup of the herbs. Warm over low heat until the herbs begin to sizzle, 3 to 5 minutes. Fry for 2 to 3 minutes more, then remove the pan from the heat and let the oil cool completely.

Heat the oven to 200°F.

Using a paring knife, peel the potato skins about ¼ inch thick and 3 inches long. (If working ahead, submerge the skins in water for up to 2 hours.)

Strain the herb oil through a fine sieve and discard the herbs. Return the oil to the pan, put a deep fat/candy thermometer in the oil, and set the pan over medium heat until it reaches 365°F. If the potato skins were soaked in water, drain and blot them dry. Working in batches to avoid overcrowding the pan, fry the peels until golden and puffed, 5 to 7 minutes. With a slotted spoon, transfer the peels to a wire rack set on a large rimmed baking sheet; keep the curls warm in the oven. Repeat with the rest of the curls.

Carefully add the remaining 1 cup of herbs to the oil (the oil will splatter). Fry until crisp, 20 to 30 seconds. Drain the herbs, using either a wire mesh skimmer or a fine sieve set over a heatproof bowl and then transfer to the rack with the curls. (Discard the oil once cool.) Toss the herbs and potato curls and season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately.





pine nut and orange cookies

The addition of olive oil makes these tasty cookies moist and rich.

Yields about 28 cookies

- ½ cup pine nuts**
- 6¾ oz. (1½ cups) unbleached all-purpose flour**
- ¼ cup granulated sugar; more for rolling**
- 3 Tbs. finely grated orange zest (from 2 medium oranges)**
- ¼ tsp. baking powder**
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt**
- ⅛ tsp. ground cinnamon**
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 large egg, beaten**

Position a rack in the upper third of the oven and heat the oven to 375°F.

Toast the pine nuts on a rimmed baking sheet, stirring occasionally, until fragrant and golden, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a small bowl to cool.

In a medium bowl, stir the flour, sugar, zest, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, and pine nuts. In a small bowl, whisk the oil and egg and add to the dry ingredients. Mix with your hands until the dough is evenly moist and holds together when squeezed, 1 to 2 minutes.

Fill a small bowl with about ¼ cup sugar. Pinch off 1 rounded teaspoonful of dough (about ½ oz.). Shape it into a ball, coat it in the sugar, and set it in on a light-colored nonstick cookie sheet. Dip the bottom of a drinking glass in the sugar and flatten the cookie to slightly less than ¼ inch thick. Repeat to make 13 more cookies.

Bake until the tops are golden and the edges are brown, 9 to 13 minutes. Let the cookies cool on the sheet for several minutes, then transfer them to a rack to cool completely. While the first batch of cookies bakes, shape the remaining dough into cookies and arrange on a second cookie sheet. When the first batch is done, bake the second batch.

The cookies will keep in an air-tight container at room temperature for up to 3 days.

*David Leite is the author of the award-winning book **The New Portuguese Table**. ▣*



Find additional recipes from *The New Portuguese Table* at FineCooking.com/extras.



Tea-Smoking

Teach your backyard grill a new trick: Instead of wood, use tea leaves and spices to infuse chicken, salmon, and more. BY ROBERT DANHI

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROMULO YANES

YOU MAY HAVE EXPERIMENTED with different kinds of woods to flavor food on the grill, but there's a good chance you haven't tried using loose tea leaves to do the same. Not yet, anyway.

Tea-smoking is an ancient Chinese technique you can use at home for wonderfully exotic and delicious results. Chicken, duck, salmon, and shrimp turn out beautifully burnished and imbued with a rich and fragrant smokiness. And all that flavor comes from a foil packet filled with tea, rice, brown sugar, spices, and citrus zest. Simply slip the packet under the grill grate—directly on the hot coals or on top of a metal gas burner shield—then close the lid and let the smoke do its magic.

Salmon fillets take on a burnished color and exotic flavor from the fragrant smoke.

ANATOMY OF A *Tea-Smoking Packet*

SUGAR

Sugar acts as a natural coloring agent. As it caramelizes, it gives food a rich amber color and a hint of sweetness.

These four simple components add complex flavor to grilled foods.

FLAVORINGS

Sweet, fragrant spices like star anise and cinnamon are traditionally used, but citrus zest, coriander, cumin, fennel, and other aromatic seeds add an exotic taste.



TEA

Loose tea leaves release aromatic smoke when subjected to dry heat. By varying the type of tea, you can imbue food with different flavor nuances.

RICE

Raw rice acts as the main source of fuel in the packet. It keeps the tea, sugar, and flavorings smoking while the food grills.



tea-smoked chicken salad with coriander and pickled red onions

Be sure to give the onions enough time to soak in the pickling mixture; this brings out their color and gives them a sour bite that punctuates the salad.

Serves 4 to 6

FOR THE PICKLED ONIONS

- 6 Tbs. rice vinegar**
- 1 tsp. granulated sugar**
- Kosher salt**
- ½ medium red onion, thinly sliced (about 1½ cups)**

FOR THE TEA-SMOKED CHICKEN

- ¼ cup whole-leaf jasmine tea**
- ¼ cup rice, preferably jasmine**
- ¼ cup light brown sugar**
- 2 Tbs. coriander seeds**
- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves (about 2 lb. total)**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

FOR THE SALAD

- 2 cups thinly sliced green cabbage**
- ½ cup matchstick-cut carrots**
- ½ cup fresh cilantro**

½ cup thinly sliced red bell pepper

2 Tbs. vegetable oil

1 Tbs. Asian chili sauce, such as Sriracha

Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

MAKE THE PICKLED ONIONS

In a small bowl, combine 2 Tbs. warm water with the rice vinegar, sugar, and ¼ tsp. salt; whisk until dissolved. Add the onions and let sit for at least 30 minutes.

SMOKE THE CHICKEN

Put the tea, rice, sugar, and coriander seeds in the center of a sheet of heavy-duty aluminum foil. (If using thinner foil, use 2 or 3 layers.) Fold the foil loosely to form a flat packet.

Prepare a medium-high gas or charcoal grill fire. Clean and oil the grill grate; set aside. Set the tea-smoking packet directly on the hot coals or on top of a metal burner shield. Put the grate back on the grill and close the lid. On a charcoal grill, leave the vents partially open and wait for smoke to rise from the vents. On a gas grill, wait 10 minutes, then open the lid to check for smoke. If there is none, close the lid and check again in a few minutes.

Meanwhile, pound the chicken breasts between 2 sheets of plastic wrap to about ¾ inch thick. Pat dry with paper towels and season generously with salt and pepper.

Arrange the chicken on the grill grate so that it's not directly over the packet, and then close the lid. Smoke the chicken, flipping once, until cooked through and an uneven brown color develops from the smoking, 5 to 7 minutes per side. Cool to room temperature, pull the chicken into bite-size strips, and set aside.

ASSEMBLE THE SALAD

In a large bowl, mix the cabbage, carrots, cilantro, bell pepper, oil, chili sauce, chicken, and the pickled onions with their liquid. Toss well. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve.

ASIAN BEGINNINGS

Tea smoking was originally a form of preserving in ancient Sichuan (a southwestern region of China). Foods were treated with a salt cure, then smoked in covered woks in three-sided outdoor kitchens, which allowed the smoke to escape easily. Nowadays, tea-smoking is used to flavor rather than preserve.

tea-smoked salmon with citrus-cucumber relish

A quick soak in dark soy sauce gives this salmon a beautiful color. If you want extra crunch, try adding diced jicama or water chestnuts to the relish.

Serves 6

FOR THE SALMON MARINADE

- ¼ cup Chinese dark soy sauce
- 1 Tbs. granulated sugar
- 1 tsp. finely grated orange zest (from one of the oranges below)
- ¼ tsp. crushed red pepper flakes
- 6 6-oz. center-cut, skin-on salmon fillets

FOR THE RELISH

- 2 Valencia oranges
- 1 large pink grapefruit
- 1 cup finely diced cucumber
- ¼ cup chopped fresh mint
- 1 Tbs. minced fresh ginger
- 1 tsp. finely grated lime zest
- 1 tsp. granulated sugar
- ½ tsp. Asian sesame oil
- Kosher salt

FOR THE TEA-SMOKED SALMON

- ¼ cup whole-leaf oolong or jasmine tea
- ¼ cup rice, preferably jasmine
- ¼ cup light brown sugar
- 8 whole star anise
- 2 Tbs. crushed cinnamon stick
- 1 Tbs. vegetable oil
- ¼ cup thinly sliced scallions
- 1 tsp. toasted sesame seeds (preferably a mixture of black and white)

MARINATE THE SALMON

In a 9x13-inch glass dish, whisk the soy sauce, sugar, orange zest, and red pepper flakes. Add the salmon and turn to coat. Cover with plastic and marinate in the refrigerator for 1 hour.

MAKE THE RELISH

Using a vegetable peeler, peel the zest from one of the oranges into 1x2-inch strips, avoiding as much of the white pith as possible. Set aside.

Cut off enough of the tops and bottoms of the oranges to expose a circle of flesh. Slice off the peel in strips from top to bottom. Working over a medium bowl, cut the segments free from the membranes, letting them fall into the bowl. Cut the grapefruit into segments using the same method.

Gently fold the cucumber, mint, ginger, lime zest, sugar, sesame oil, and ¼ tsp. salt into the citrus. Season to taste with more salt.

SMOKE THE SALMON

Put the tea, rice, sugar, star anise, cinnamon, and reserved orange zest strips in the center of a sheet of heavy-duty aluminum foil. (If using thinner foil, use 2 or 3 layers.) Fold the foil loosely to form a flat packet.

Prepare a medium-high gas or charcoal grill fire. Clean and oil the grill grate; set aside. Set the tea-smoking packet directly on the hot coals or on top of a metal burner shield. Put the grate back on the grill and close the lid. On a charcoal grill, leave the vents partially open and wait for smoke to rise from the vents. On a gas grill, wait 10 minutes, then open the lid to check for smoke. If there is none, close the lid and check again in a few minutes.

Drain the salmon and pat dry with paper towels. Brush the salmon lightly with the oil.

Arrange the salmon skin side up on the grill grate so that it's not directly over the packet, and then close the lid. Smoke the salmon, flipping once, until cooked to medium doneness, 3 to 5 minutes per side.

Serve with the citrus relish, sprinkled with the scallions and sesame seeds.



Watch a video of the tea-smoking technique with author Robert Danhi at [FineCooking.com/extras](https://www.finecooking.com/extras).



crisp tea-smoked duck with green mango and basil salad

Searing the duck breasts in a skillet after smoking gives them delicious crisp skin. You can substitute apples, plums, or peaches for the mangos.

Serves 4

FOR THE PAN-ROASTED PEANUTS

- ¼ cup unsalted peanuts

FOR THE TEA-SMOKED DUCK

- 1 medium orange
- ¼ cup whole-leaf lychee tea
- ¼ cup rice, preferably jasmine
- ¼ cup light brown sugar
- 2 large or 4 small boneless duck breasts (about 2 lb. total)
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

FOR THE MANGO-BASIL SALAD

- 1 Tbs. fresh lime juice; more as needed
- 1 Tbs. fish sauce
- 1 medium clove garlic, minced
- 1 small shallot, thinly sliced
- 1 red serrano chile (or other small hot red chile), halved lengthwise and thinly sliced crosswise
- 1 Tbs. light brown palm sugar (or light brown sugar); more as needed
- 2 large unripe mangos, peeled and cut into ½-inch-thick slices
- ½ cup roughly chopped basil, preferably Thai or Asian basil
- Kosher salt

ROAST THE PEANUTS

Cook the peanuts in an 8-inch skillet over low heat, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned in spots, 2 to 3 minutes. Coarsely chop the peanuts. Set aside.

SMOKE THE DUCK

Using a vegetable peeler, peel the zest from the orange in 1x2-inch strips, avoiding as much of the white pith as possible. Reserve the orange for another use. Put the orange zest, tea, rice, and sugar in the center of a sheet of heavy-duty aluminum foil. (If using thinner foil, use 2 or 3 layers.) Fold the foil loosely to form a flat packet.

Prepare a medium-high gas or charcoal grill fire. Clean and oil the grill grate; set aside. Set the tea-smoking packet directly on the hot coals or on top of a metal burner shield. Put the grate back on the grill and close the lid. On a charcoal grill, leave the vents partially open and wait for smoke to rise from the vents. On a gas grill, wait 10 minutes, then open the lid to check for smoke. If there is none, close the lid and check again in a few minutes.

Meanwhile, with a sharp knife, trim any silver-skin from the duck breasts and score the skin in a diamond pattern without cutting all the way through to the meat. Pat dry with paper

towels and season generously all over with salt and pepper.

Arrange the breasts skin side up on the grill grate so they're not directly over the packet, and then close the lid. Smoke the duck until the skin turns an uneven amber-brown color on the edges, 15 to 17 minutes (the skin side will still be uncooked). Remove from the grill.

Heat a 12-inch skillet over medium-low heat, add the smoked duck breasts skin side down and cook slowly, undisturbed, until some fat renders, the skin gets deep brown and crisp, and the breasts are cooked to medium-rare or medium doneness (an instant-read thermometer inserted into a breast should read 135°F to 140°F), 10 to 15 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board skin side up and let rest for 5 minutes. Slice thinly.

MAKE THE SALAD

In a medium bowl, whisk the lime juice, fish sauce, garlic, shallot, chile, and sugar. Add the mangos and basil and gently toss to coat. Season to taste with lime juice, sugar, and salt (the riper the mango, the less sugar and the more lime juice you'll need).

Divide and arrange the salad and then the duck on 4 plates; sprinkle with the peanuts.



coconut noodle soup with tea-smoked shrimp

Feel free to substitute other types of curry paste, such as yellow, green, or even the sweet and spiced massaman. Any cooked noodles (or pasta) can work in this recipe.

Serves 8

FOR THE SOUP

- 2 13.5- to 14-oz. cans coconut milk
- 1 Tbs. red curry paste
- 6 cups lower-salt chicken broth
- 3 stalks lemongrass, lightly smashed
- 8 $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch-thick slices peeled fresh ginger
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh lime juice
- 2 Tbs. fish sauce
- 1 tsp. granulated sugar
- Kosher salt
- 2 cups oyster mushrooms, trimmed and cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch strips
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved

FOR THE TEA-SMOKED SHRIMP

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Thai or whole-leaf jasmine tea
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup rice, preferably jasmine
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup light brown sugar
- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ lb. jumbo shrimp (21 to 25 per lb.; preferably wild), peeled and deveined
- Kosher salt
- 2 Tbs. minced cilantro stems

FOR ASSEMBLY

- 8 oz. rice noodles (flat or vermicelli), soaked in room-temperature water for 30 minutes to 1 hour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup lightly packed fresh cilantro leaves
- 2 wild lime leaves, vein removed, cut into short fine threads (optional)

MAKE THE SOUP

In a 4-quart pot, simmer $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the coconut milk over medium heat, stirring often until it reduces by half and thickens, 1 to 2 minutes. Whisk in the curry paste until dissolved, about 1 minute. Add the remaining coconut milk, chicken broth, lemongrass, and ginger. Raise the heat to medium high, bring to a boil, and then reduce to a simmer. Cook, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes.

Strain into another 4-quart pot. Stir in the lime juice, fish sauce, sugar, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. salt. Season to taste with more salt. Add the mushrooms and cherry tomatoes and set aside.

SMOKE THE SHRIMP

Soak thirteen 8-inch bamboo skewers in water for at least 30 minutes.

Put the tea, rice, and sugar in the center of a sheet of heavy-duty aluminum foil. (If using thinner foil, use 2 or 3 layers.) Fold the foil loosely to form a flat packet.

Prepare a medium-high gas or charcoal grill fire. Clean and oil the grill grate; set aside. Set the tea-smoking packet directly on the hot coals or on top of a metal burner shield. Put the grate back on the grill and close the lid. On a charcoal grill, leave the vents partially open and wait for smoke to rise from the vents. On a gas grill, wait 10 minutes, then open the lid to check for smoke. If there is none, close the lid and check again in a few minutes.

Meanwhile, pat the shrimp dry with paper towels. Thread three shrimp onto each skewer, season with salt, and sprinkle with the cilantro stems.

Arrange the shrimp skewers on the grill grate so they're not directly over the packet, and then close the lid. Smoke the shrimp, flipping once, until just cooked through, 3 to 5 minutes total. Remove the shrimp from the skewers, cut them in half lengthwise, and set aside.

ASSEMBLE THE SOUP

Bring a large pot of water to a boil over medium-high heat. Add the soaked noodles and cook, 1 to 2 minutes. Drain well and divide among 8 large bowls (about 1 cup of noodles in each). Reheat the soup and pour about $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups into each bowl, evenly distributing the mushrooms and tomatoes. Divide the shrimp among the bowls and garnish with the cilantro leaves and wild lime leaves (if using).



SMOKE SUCCESS

Three keys to perfectly smoked foods:

KEEP IT DRY

Make sure the food you're smoking is as dry as possible by patting it well with a paper towel. Dry food will absorb the smoke better and will pick up a more even color and flavor.

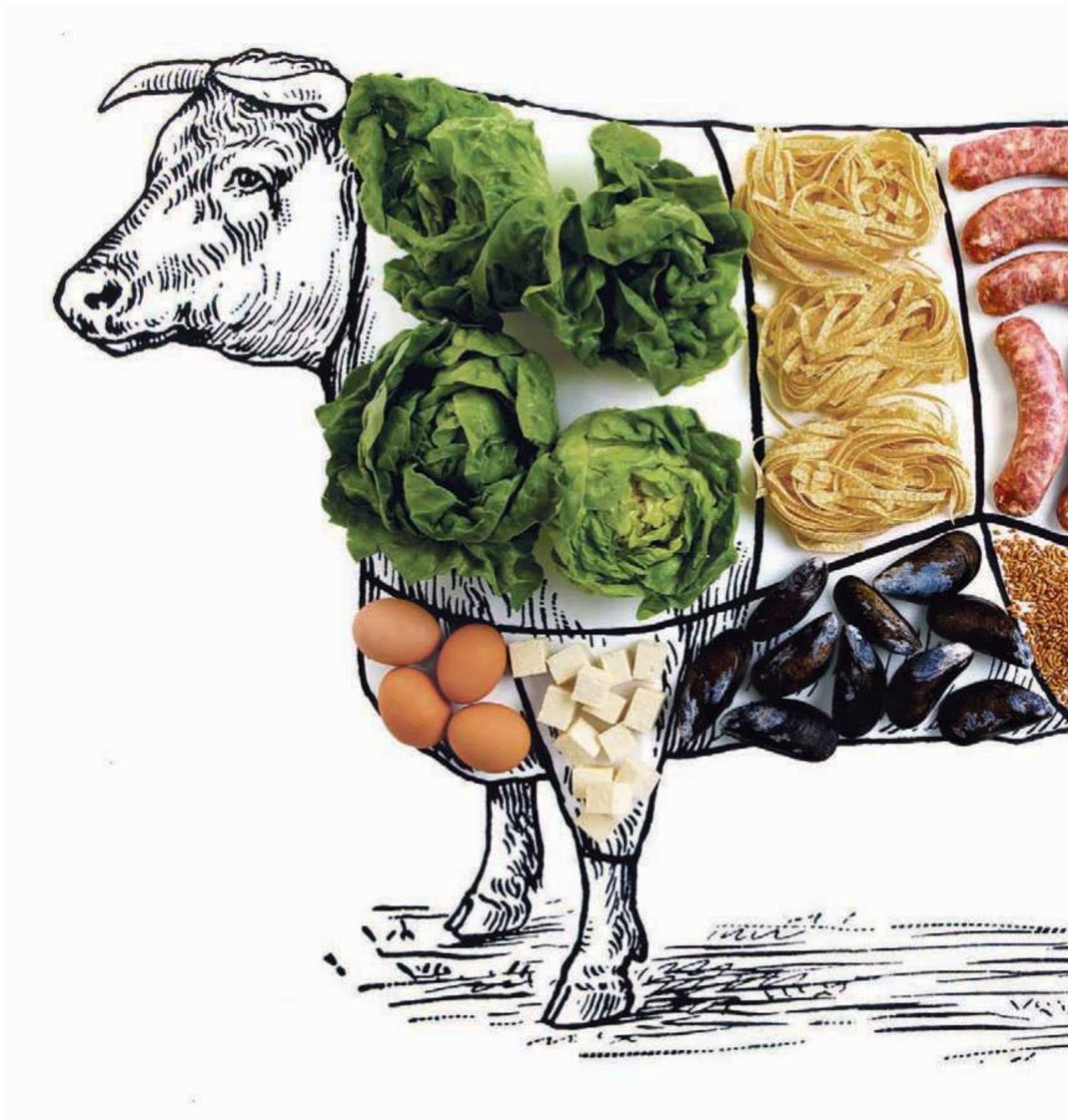
GENTLE FLAVOR

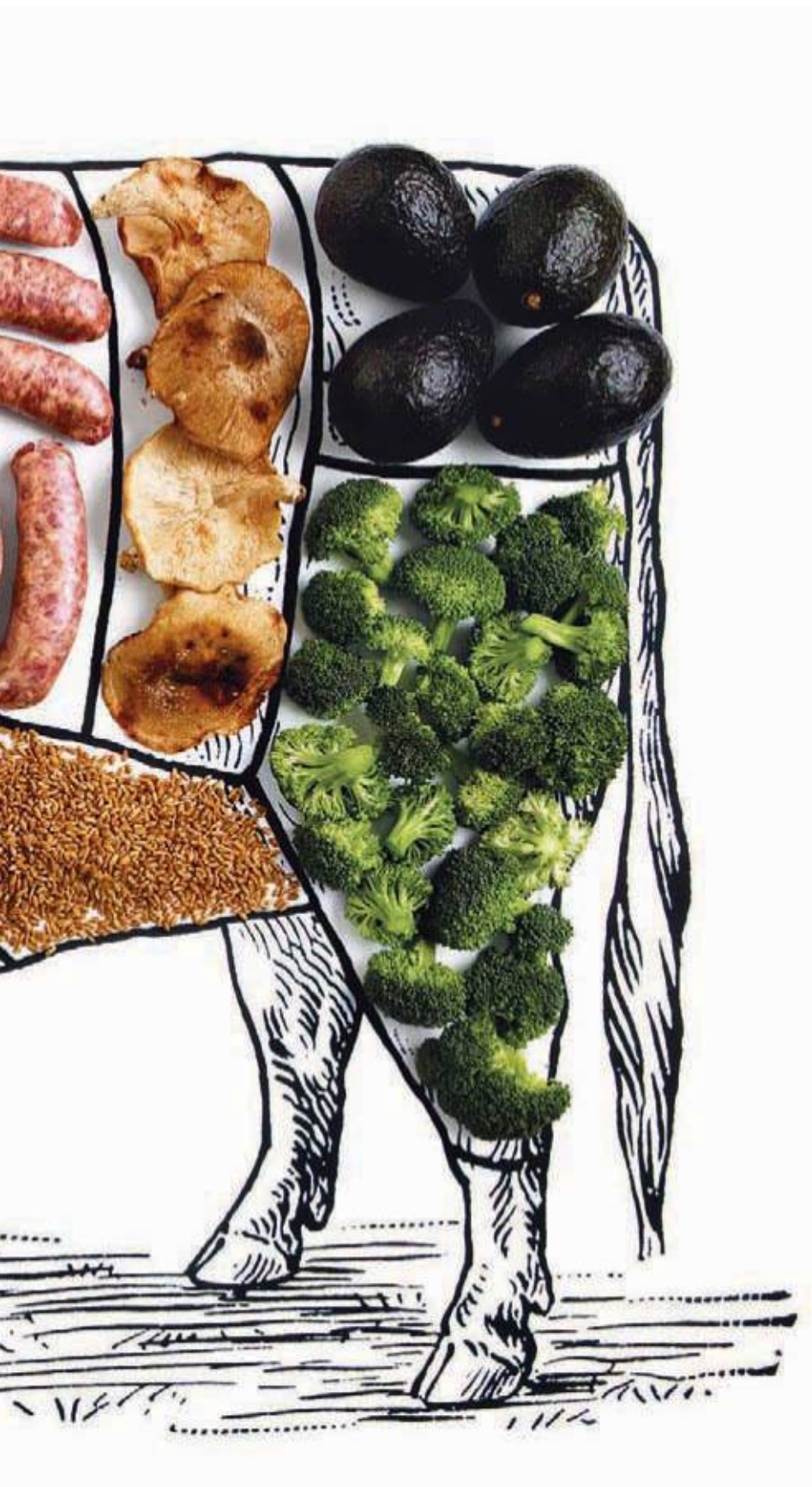
Arrange the food on the grill so that it's not directly above the smoking packet. This way, it gets a gentle infusion of smoky flavor rather than an overwhelming hit of smoke.

COLOR TALKS

Color is a clear indication of flavor. If the food takes on a dark, amber hue before it's cooked to your liking, remove the smoking packet from the heat and continue to grill until the food is done.

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10 Ways to Eat *Less* Meat

BY SUSIE MIDDLETON

There are lots of good reasons to eat a little less meat these days.

But who knew that what's good for the environment, good for your health, and good for your wallet could be so much fun for the cook, too? Once you cook with (and eat) less meat, you'll find yourself adding a great new lineup of dishes to your weekly repertoire. Here are ten deliciously easy ways to get started.



No. 1



Use meat as a condiment

Sometimes all you need to turn a vegetable side dish into a satisfying main course is just a little bit of full-flavored meat, such as bacon, ham, salami, pancetta, or sausage. All add big flavor in small amounts. A seasonal gratin (recipe at right) gets even heartier with the addition of bacon.

indian summer gratin with butternut squash, potatoes, corn, and bacon

You can make this a day ahead, if you like; the flavors will develop even more overnight. Reheat at 375°F, covered, for 20 minutes.

Serves 4 as a main dish, 6 as a side

- 1 Tbs. plus ½ tsp. unsalted butter
- 4 slices bacon
- 1½ cups fresh breadcrumbs
- ½ cup plus 2 Tbs. finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano
- 1 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1½ tsp. chopped fresh thyme leaves
- Kosher salt
- 1 large or 2 medium leeks (white and light-green parts only), halved and sliced ¼ inch thick
- 2 tsp. minced fresh garlic
- 1¼ to 2 cups fresh corn kernels (from 3 to 4 large ears)
- Freshly ground black pepper
- ¾ cup heavy cream
- ¾ cup lower-salt chicken broth
- ½ tsp. finely grated lemon zest
- 12 oz. peeled, seeded butternut squash, cut into ½-inch dice (about 2½ cups)
- 8 oz. Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into ½-inch dice (about 1½ cups)

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 400°F. Rub a 2-quart shallow gratin dish with ½ tsp. of the butter.

In a 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat, cook the bacon until crisp, about 8 minutes. Transfer the bacon to paper towels. Reserve 2 Tbs. of the fat in the skillet; discard the remainder. When the bacon is cool, crumble or mince it.

In a small bowl, combine 1 Tbs. of the crumbled bacon with the breadcrumbs,

2 Tbs. of the Parmigiano, the olive oil, ½ tsp. of the thyme, and a large pinch of salt. Mix well.

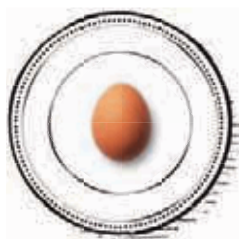
Add the remaining 1 Tbs. butter to the skillet with the bacon fat and melt over medium heat. Add the leeks and a pinch of salt, and cook, stirring, until softened and just starting to turn golden, 6 to 7 minutes. Add the garlic and stir well. Add the corn, ¼ tsp. salt, and a few grinds of pepper. Cook, stirring, until the corn has lost its raw look and is slightly shrunken, 2 to 3 minutes. Cool slightly.

Combine the cream and chicken broth in a 2-cup liquid measure. Add the lemon zest, ½ tsp. salt, and a few grinds of pepper. Stir to mix well.

In a large bowl, combine the remaining bacon, the corn-leek mixture, the diced squash, potatoes, and remaining 1 tsp. thyme. Toss lightly to combine. Spread the mixture evenly in the gratin dish. Sprinkle the remaining ½ cup Parmigiano on top. Stir the cream mixture one more time and pour it over everything as evenly as possible. (Be sure to scrape out any seasonings left in the cup.) Press down on the vegetables with a spatula so that the liquid surrounds them and everything is evenly distributed. Sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture evenly over all.

Cover with foil and bake for 20 minutes. Remove the foil and continue to bake until the crumb topping is deeply golden and the squash and potatoes are tender when pierced with a fork, about 25 minutes. The liquid should have bubbled below the surface of the vegetables, leaving browned bits around the edge of the pan. Let cool for 20 to 25 minutes before serving.

No. 2



Have breakfast for dinner

Eggs have a lot going for them:

They're a great source of protein, they're almost always in the fridge, and they're the basis for many different dishes. An omelet of smoked Cheddar and sautéed leeks, a savory bread pudding with roasted late-summer vegetables, or a frittata with pasta and summer greens (recipe at right)—do any of these sound like they should be relegated to breakfast? You get the point.

No. 3



Give veggies top billing

Change the way you think about portions and make a larger-than-usual amount of roasted or sautéed vegetables. This way, you can serve a smaller amount of meat and the plate will still feel abundant. Try using vegetables as a bed for that smaller portion of meat.

spaghetti frittata with arugula and fresh herbs

If you have leftover cooked pasta in the fridge, this is a great way to use it up.

Serves 4 to 6 as a main course

Kosher salt

- 3 oz. uncooked dried spaghetti (or 1½ cups cooked)**
- 2 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 Tbs. unsalted butter**
- 1 large or 2 small shallots, trimmed, peeled, and thinly sliced crosswise**
- 2 oz. (about 2 cups lightly packed) arugula, stemmed if necessary**
- 8 large eggs (preferably at room temperature)**
- ¾ cup heavy cream**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano (use the large holes on a box grater)**
- 2 Tbs. finely chopped fresh mint**
- 2 Tbs. chopped fresh parsley**
- 2 Tbs. sliced chives**

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 375°F. Bring a large pot of well-salted water to a boil over high heat.

Cook the spaghetti in the boiling water according to package directions. Drain well and let cool. Transfer to a medium bowl.

In an ovenproof 10-inch nonstick skillet, heat 1 Tbs. of the olive oil and ½ Tbs. of the butter over medium heat. Add the shallots and a pinch of salt and cook, stirring occasionally, until the shallots are softened and lightly golden, about 8 minutes. Add the arugula and toss with tongs until wilted, about 1 minute.

With a heatproof spatula, scrape the arugula mixture and any fat left in the pan into the bowl with the pasta. Toss lightly to combine.

In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, cream, ½ tsp. salt, and several grinds of pepper. Add the pasta mixture, Parmigiano, mint, parsley, and chives. Mix gently but thoroughly.

Heat the remaining 1 Tbs. oil and ½ Tbs. butter in the skillet over medium-high heat. When the butter has melted and is bubbling, add the egg mixture. Use the heatproof spatula to gently distribute the ingredients evenly. Reduce the heat to medium low and cook until the eggs have set just along the outside edge of the pan, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer the skillet to the oven and bake until the frittata is puffed, golden, and set, 22 to 24 minutes.

Let the frittata cool in the pan for 15 to 20 minutes. Run the spatula gently around the edge and underneath the frittata, and slide it onto a cutting board. Let sit for 5 to 10 minutes. Cut into wedges and serve.



No. 4



Turn salad into supper

Dinner salads are, by their very nature, less-meat meals—and they're incredibly versatile. The secret to making a dinner-worthy salad is a generous mix of interesting ingredients: lots of greens, plenty of satisfying add-ins (like nuts, cheeses, and avocado), and flavor-packed vinaigrettes. Then you need only a small amount of protein—a few shrimp or scallops, or several slices of chicken (recipe at right).

southwestern grilled chicken salad with tomato and black bean salsa

The salsa makes this salad filling; you won't even notice the smaller portion of chicken.

Serves 4

- 1 boneless skinless chicken breast half (6 to 7 oz.), trimmed**
- ½ Tbs. chili powder**
- 1 tsp. light or dark brown sugar**
- ½ tsp. ground coriander**
- ½ tsp. ground cumin**
- Kosher salt**
- 6 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil; more for the grill**
- 2 Tbs. plus 2 tsp. fresh lime juice**
- 1 Tbs. plus 2 tsp. chopped fresh cilantro, plus leaves for garnish**
- 2 tsp. honey**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- Green Tabasco (optional)**
- 1 cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained**
- 4 oz. small cherry or grape tomatoes, quartered or halved (about ¾ cup)**
- 1 large scallion, thinly sliced**
- 2 small heads Bibb lettuce, torn into bite-size pieces (about 9 cups)**
- 1 medium firm-ripe avocado**
- ¼ cup toasted pine nuts or pepitas**

Prepare a medium-high gas or charcoal grill fire.

Trim and then butterfly the chicken breast by slicing it horizontally almost but not entirely in half so you can open it like a book.

Combine the chili powder, brown sugar, coriander, cumin, and ¾ tsp. salt in a small bowl. Rub some of the spice mix over both sides of the butterflied chicken breast (you won't need it all) and let sit while the grill heats.

Clean and oil the grill grate. Grill the breast until the edges of the top side are white, about 3 minutes. Flip and cook until just done, 1 to 2 minutes more. Let the chicken rest for 5 to 10 minutes.

In a small bowl or a glass jar with a tight lid, combine the olive oil, lime juice, 1 Tbs. of the cilantro, the honey, ½ tsp. salt, a few grinds of pepper, and a few shakes of green Tabasco (if using). Whisk or shake well to combine.

Combine the black beans, tomatoes, scallion, the remaining 2 tsp. cilantro, and a pinch of salt in a small bowl. Add 2 Tbs. of the dressing and toss gently.

Put the lettuce in a bowl, season with a little salt, and toss with just enough of the dressing to lightly coat. (Reserve a little to drizzle on the chicken.) Arrange the lettuce on a platter or four dinner plates. Slice the chicken breast very thinly. Pit and slice the avocado. Arrange the chicken, avocado, and salsa on the lettuce. Drizzle a little of the remaining dressing over the chicken and avocado. Garnish with the pine nuts or pepitas and the cilantro leaves.



No. 5



Discover grains

Hearty grains are filling foundations for (nearly) meatless dinners. The grains section of your supermarket is packed with varieties you may not have tried, from wheat berries (recipe at right) and bulgur to quinoa and millet. Many of these grains are good sources of protein, easy to prepare, and can be made ahead.

No. 6



Add “meaty” flavor

There are some ingredients with such satisfying flavor (what the Japanese call “umami,” or the fifth flavor) that they can make a dish without meat taste meaty. Use any of these with vegetables, grains, legumes, or pastas, and you won’t miss the meat:

- sautéed or dried mushrooms
- roasted or sun-dried tomatoes
- roasted eggplant
- toasted nuts and nut butters
- caramelized onions, leeks, or shallots
- miso



provençal wheat berry salad with shrimp and mustard-caper vinaigrette

Halving the shrimp lengthwise makes a small amount seem more abundant. This salad is best the day it’s made, but it’s a tasty leftover, too. Just toss it with a little of the remaining vinaigrette and serve it warm or at room temperature, not cold.

Yields 7½ cups; serves 4 as a main dish

- 1 cup wheat berries, preferably winter or hard wheat**
Kosher salt
- 8 oz. green beans, trimmed**
- 1 14-oz. can artichoke hearts, drained, cut in half, and thinly sliced**
- 8 oz. small cherry or grape tomatoes, quartered or halved (about 1½ cups)**
- ½ cup roughly chopped, well-toasted almonds**
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil**
- ¼ cup chopped fresh mint**
- ¼ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley**
Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 recipe Mustard-Caper Vinaigrette (at right)**
- ½ lb. medium shrimp (41 to 50 per lb.), preferably wild, peeled, deveined, and halved lengthwise**
- 1 Tbs. olive oil**

In a large (4-quart) saucepan, combine the wheat berries, ¾ teaspoon salt, and 5 to 6 cups of water (enough to cover by 2 inches). Bring to a boil over high heat, reduce the heat to maintain a slow simmer, and cook, partially covered, until the wheat berries are tender but pleasantly chewy. Begin checking after 50 minutes, though they may take up to 90 minutes. Drain the wheat well and spread on a baking sheet to cool. (You can cook the wheat up to 1 day ahead; refrigerate after cooling. Bring to room temperature before using. If the wheat seems wet, spread on dishtowels to dry for about a half-hour.)

Bring another large (4-quart) saucepan of water to a boil over high heat, and put a clean dishtowel on the counter. Add 1 tsp. salt and the green beans to the boiling water;

cook until tender, 4 to 8 minutes. Drain and transfer the beans to the dishtowel to cool in one layer. When cool, cut them into ½- to ¾-inch pieces.

In a large bowl, combine the wheat berries, green beans, artichoke hearts, tomatoes, three-quarters of the almonds, the chopped herbs, several grinds of pepper, and ½ cup of the Mustard-Caper Vinaigrette. Toss thoroughly. Season to taste with more salt, pepper, and vinaigrette. You can overdress the salad a bit at first, as the grains will keep absorbing it.

Season the shrimp with salt. Heat the olive oil in a 12-inch skillet over high heat until shimmering. Add the shrimp in a single layer and cook undisturbed until lightly browned on the bottoms, 1 to 2 minutes. Flip and continue to cook until the shrimp are curled and just opaque throughout, 1 minute.

Toss the shrimp into the salad and sprinkle with the remaining almonds.

MUSTARD-CAPER VINAIGRETTE

Yields about 1 cup

- ¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 2 Tbs. red wine vinegar**
- 2 Tbs. fresh lemon juice**
- 1 Tbs. minced capers (rinsed if salt-packed)**
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard**
- 1½ tsp. light brown sugar**
- 1 tsp. freshly grated lemon zest**
- 1 tsp. minced fresh garlic**
Dash Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt**
- ¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper**

In a small bowl or glass jar with a tight lid, whisk or shake all of the ingredients. The vinaigrette can be refrigerated for a week.

No. 7



Try tofu

You don't have to be a vegetarian to eat tofu. Extra-firm tofu is meaty and filling, making it a fine addition to summer kebabs (recipe at right) on meatless nights. The great thing about tofu is that it absorbs the flavors of the ingredients it's cooked with. Try adding it to summer veggie soups, stir-fries, and grain pilafs.



sesame-ginger tofu and shiitake kebabs

Serve these kebabs with brown rice or somen noodles.

Yields 8 kebabs; serves 4

- 1 14-oz. package water-packed extra-firm tofu, well drained**
- ¼ cup reduced-sodium soy sauce**
- 3 Tbs. rice wine (sake or Shaoxing)**
- 3 Tbs. hoisin sauce**
- 2 Tbs. peanut oil**
- 2 Tbs. Asian sesame oil**
- 2 Tbs. chopped fresh ginger**
- 1 Tbs. honey**
- 40 medium shiitake mushrooms (about 1 lb.), stems trimmed**
- 2 bunches scallions (white and light-green parts only), cut into 1-inch lengths to yield 40 pieces**
- 1 orange**
- Nonstick cooking spray**

In a shallow pan, soak eight 12-inch bamboo skewers in water while you work. Sandwich the tofu between paper towels and put on a plate. Set a small heavy pot or cutting board on the tofu to press out excess moisture. Let sit for 20 to 30 minutes.

Cut the tofu into 40 cubes by first slicing the tofu block in half horizontally and then cutting each half into 20 cubes.

In a large bowl, whisk the soy sauce, rice wine, hoisin sauce, peanut oil, sesame oil, ginger, and honey. Add the tofu, mushrooms, and scallions. Marinate at room temperature for 30 to 45 minutes, stirring frequently but gently.

Trim the ends of the orange, cut it lengthwise into quarters, and then slice each quarter crosswise into 6 slices, to yield 24 slices total.

Line a large heavy-duty rimmed baking sheet with foil and coat the foil with cooking spray. Position a rack 8 inches from the broiler element and heat the broiler on high.

Thread 5 scallion pieces, 5 shiitakes, 5 pieces of tofu, and 3 orange slices onto each skewer in an alternating pattern. Arrange the skewers on the baking sheet. Broil until nicely browned on one side, 5 to 6 minutes. Gently turn the kebabs over and cook until golden brown on the other side, 5 to 6 minutes more.

Meanwhile, pour the remaining marinade into a small (1-quart) saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to maintain a gentle simmer and cook until slightly reduced and the flavors meld, about 2 minutes.

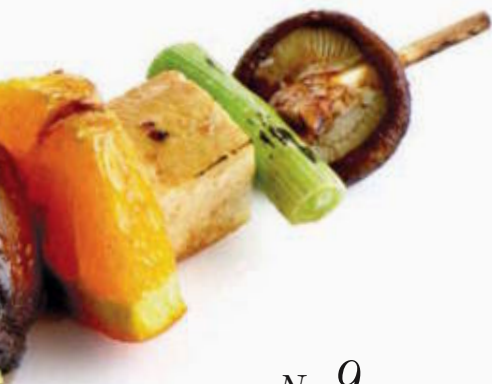
Arrange the kebabs on a serving platter or on individual plates. Drizzle with the sauce and serve.

No. 8



Be a vegetarian by day

Meat can sneak into every meal of the day if we let it, so try going meatless for two out of three meals. Make a yogurt, blueberry, and granola parfait for breakfast. For lunch, have an avocado, tomato, and Cheddar sandwich or a bowl of vegetable soup with croutons. Save the daily meat for dinner.



No. 9



Consider shellfish

When deciding what's for dinner, shellfish is rarely the first thing that comes to mind. But since mussels, oysters, clams, and scallops are smart, sustainable buys, why not put a steaming bowl of mussels (recipe at right) or a shellfish chowder on your menu?

No. 10



Keep it varied

On meatless nights, have a repertoire of versatile recipes at the ready. Try homemade pizza dough with a variety of meatless toppings, or fried rice with a range of meatless add-ins. Baked pastas and simple fresh-tomato pan sauces for pasta are also endlessly variable.

steamed mussels with bell peppers, watercress, and herbed toasts

A wide Dutch oven (not a tall soup pot) is best for steaming mussels; if they're stacked no more than 3 or 4 layers deep, the mussels will all steam—and open—at about the same rate.

Serves 4

- ½ cup dry sherry
- ½ cup orange juice
- 2 Tbs. tomato paste
- 4 tsp. sherry vinegar
- 2 tsp. honey
- 5 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1½ tsp. coarsely chopped fresh thyme
- 12 ½-inch-thick slices baguette (cut on an angle)
- Kosher salt
- 2 Tbs. unsalted butter
- ¾ large red bell pepper, cut into medium dice (about ¾ cup)
- ¾ large yellow bell pepper, cut into medium dice (about ¾ cup)
- 2 Tbs. minced fresh garlic
- 1 tsp. minced fresh serrano chile
- 4 lb. mussels, scrubbed and debearded
- 4 oz. fresh watercress, tough stems trimmed, washed well

In a small bowl, combine ½ cup water with the sherry, orange juice, tomato paste, vinegar, and honey.

In another small bowl, mix 3 Tbs. of the olive oil and the thyme. Position a rack 6 inches

from the broiler and heat the broiler on high. Arrange the baguette slices on a baking sheet. Brush both sides with some of the thyme oil and sprinkle lightly with salt. Toast under the broiler, flipping once, until golden brown on one side and lightly toasted on the other, about 5 minutes total.

Meanwhile, in a medium (6-quart) Dutch oven, heat the remaining 2 Tbs. olive oil and 1 Tbs. of the butter over medium heat. Add the bell peppers, raise the heat to medium high, and cook, stirring occasionally, until browned in spots and somewhat softened, 6 to 8 minutes. Add the garlic and chile and cook briefly, stirring, until fragrant and well combined. Add the sherry mixture, stir, and bring to a simmer. Add the mussels, cover the pot, and cook until the mussels have opened, 3 to 4 minutes. Remove from the heat, toss in all but a few sprigs of the watercress, and stir gently to partially wilt it.

Using a slotted spoon, transfer the mussels and watercress to 4 wide, shallow serving bowls. Add the remaining 1 Tbs. butter to the broth and stir until melted. Ladle the broth over the mussels. Garnish with the remaining watercress sprigs and serve with the toasts on the side.

Susie Middleton is Fine Cooking's editor at large. ■



ZUCCHINI

Easy and unexpected recipes for summer's iconic squash and its blossoms—plus shop, prep, and store tips. BY MARYELLEN DRISCOLL



AT OUR FARM IN UPSTATE NEW YORK, zucchini is one crop no one is eager to harvest. Picking the “just rights” (not too big and not too small) from the low-to-the-ground, bushy plants means a lot of bending—down, up, down, up—while lugging an increasingly heavy tote along 300-foot rows. So there’s your backache. With that, you’re apt to get a rash from wrist to elbow from brushing against the prickly stems. Then there are the busy, buzzy, squash-blossom-loving bees; they aren’t the easiest coworkers to get along with.

And yet, at the end of the day, when I’ve no idea what to make for dinner, zucchini is most often what I reach for. Enthusiastically. That’s because it pairs naturally with practically everything else that grows in the garden in summer and early fall. It has a texture and a nutty essence that I love (as well as delicious, subtly flavored blossoms). And it’s just so easy to prep and cook on the stove, in the oven, or on the grill. Of course, if you make the salad on page 64, you don’t have to cook it at all.





two-color zucchini ribbons with mint and olive vinaigrette

If you can find both yellow and green zucchini, the variation in color is nice. And while small zucchini is ideal, medium or medium-large will work as well; simply avoid using the seedy, spongy core.

Serves 4

- 8 oz. zucchini, preferably small (about 2)
- 8 oz. yellow zucchini or summer squash, preferably small (about 2)
- 2 cups frisée, preferably the tender heart portion, torn into 2-inch pieces
- 3 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 Tbs. minced mild green olives, such as Cerignola
- 1 Tbs. fresh lemon juice plus 1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest

- 2 tsp. finely chopped fresh mint leaves
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

Trim the ends of the zucchini and yellow squash. With a vegetable peeler, shave each zucchini and squash lengthwise into very thin, wide strips, about $\frac{1}{16}$ inch thick, until you reach the seed core. Discard the core. Put the squash ribbons and frisée in a serving bowl.

In a small liquid measuring cup, whisk the olive oil, olives, lemon juice and zest, mint, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt, and $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. pepper. Toss the dressing into the squash and frisée. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Toss again and serve.

grilled zucchini with chive oil

The subtle, nutty flavor of walnut oil complements the chives and zucchini, but you can substitute a mild-flavored oil, such as safflower, canola, or plain (not extra-virgin) olive oil. Refrigerate leftover infused oil for up to 3 days. Use in pasta salads or drizzle over eggs, grilled fish, or just about any meat, especially lamb.

Serves 4

- ¾ oz. chives, thinly sliced (about 6 Tbs.)**
- ½ cup plus 2 Tbs. walnut oil**
- 1 lb. small zucchini (3 to 4), cut on a sharp angle into ½-inch-thick ovals**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

Put all but 1 Tbs. of the chives in a blender. Begin to blend while slowly pouring ½ cup of the walnut oil through the feed hole of the blender lid. Continue to blend for 1 minute. Stop to scrape down the sides of the blender with a rubber spatula. Blend for another minute. Set aside for 30 minutes to 1 hour to let the flavors infuse.

Strain the oil through a fine sieve into a bowl, pressing the puréed chives with a rubber spatula or the back of a spoon to extract any remaining oil.

Prepare a medium-high charcoal or gas grill fire.

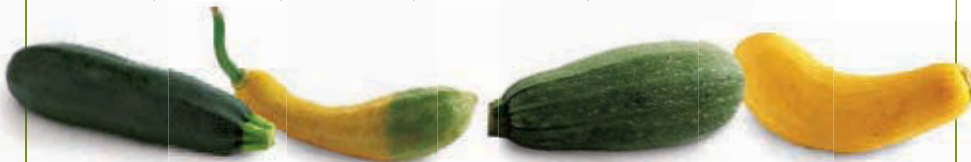
In a medium bowl, toss the zucchini with the remaining 2 Tbs. oil, ½ tsp. salt, and a few grinds of pepper.

Set the zucchini ovals at an angle on the grill grates and cook until the zucchini has developed rich brown grill marks, about 3 minutes. Turn the zucchini with tongs and cook until the other sides have rich brown grill marks and the zucchini is tender, about 3 minutes. Transfer to a small serving dish or platter.

Drizzle 3 to 4 tsp. of the chive oil over the zucchini and sprinkle with the reserved 1 Tbs. chives.

ZUCCHINI & FRIENDS: A GUIDE

There are many varieties of zucchini and other summer squash worth trying. These are some of our favorites, and the ones you're most likely to see grown by farms in your area or sold at grocery stores with a good produce selection. They're also similar in shape, so they'll cook the same way—this means you can use any of them in the recipes here.



ZUCCHINI The most common summer squash is cylindrical green zucchini, though the golden variety is worth seeking out, too. The skin of the latter maintains its deep yellow color when cooked and isn't as seedy as its yellow summer squash cousins.

ZEPHYR A slender, attractive, firm-textured summer squash, Zephyr is mostly yellow, with a couple of inches of light green at the blossom end and faint white vertical stripes.

COUSA Also called Lebanese, Magda, and Kuta, among other names, Cousa is a stout, cylindrical green squash. It bruises easily, but don't be deterred by cosmetic blemishes. It's valued for retaining a firm texture after being cooked.

CROOKNECK Also known as yellow squash, this variety has a curved neck. It should be handled with care, as its thin skin bruises easily.



Find recipes for chocolate-studded zucchini bread and creamy pasta with squash blossoms at FineCooking.com/extras.



sautéed zucchini with za'atar and crispy chickpeas

Couscous makes a nice bed for this simple side dish flavored with za'atar, a zesty Middle Eastern blend of spices and sesame seeds. For more on za'atar, see Test Kitchen, p. 89.

Serves 4

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup cooked chickpeas

2 Tbs. cornstarch

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup plus 2 Tbs. olive oil

1 Tbs. plus 1 tsp. za'atar

Kosher salt

**1 lb. small zucchini (3 to 4), cut
into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-thick half moons**

**$\frac{1}{2}$ small red onion, finely diced
(3 to 4 Tbs.)**

In a colander, rinse the chickpeas.

Pat dry in a clean dishtowel. Spread the cornstarch in a pie pan or on a dinner plate with raised edges. Add the chickpeas and roll them around to coat. Transfer to a mesh strainer and shake to remove excess starch.

In a small (8-inch) skillet, heat $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the olive oil over medium heat until shimmering hot. Add the chickpeas, cover with a splatter screen, and cook, gently shaking the pan from time to time, until golden-brown, about 5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the chickpeas to a plate lined with paper towels. Sprinkle the chickpeas with 1 tsp. of the za'atar and a generous pinch of salt. Roll the chickpeas around to evenly coat with the spice mixture. Set aside.

Heat the remaining 2 Tbs. oil in a 12-inch skillet over high heat until shimmering hot. Add the squash, arranging it to fit in a single, snug layer. Season generously with salt and cook undisturbed until deep golden-brown, about 2 minutes. Push a spatula through the pan to turn the squash over, following with tongs or a fork to flip any unturned pieces. Sprinkle the diced onion and remaining 1 Tbs. za'atar over the zucchini and stir with a spatula to blend. Transfer the zucchini to a serving bowl. Sprinkle with the fried chickpeas and serve.

ZUCCHINI: SHOP & STORE

- Try to find a local source. Farms are likely to grow varieties valued for their flavor and texture, while supermarket options are usually favored for their ability to stand up to transport and storage—meaning less flavor and a spongier texture.
- All summer squash should have skin that's firm, smooth, and naturally glossy; puckering is a sign of age and dehydration.
- Small and medium squash tend to have better flavor and texture. (The Goliaths that your green-thumb neighbor might try to pawn off on you tend to be bland and laden with seeds.)
- Keep squash in a plastic bag in the refrigerator's crisper drawer. It will last for four to seven days, depending on its freshness when purchased.

fried squash blossoms

Dipped in a simple tempura-like batter and fried, squash blossoms can be a crisp, unexpectedly succulent pre-dinner snack.

Serves 4 to 6 as an appetizer

6 oz. (1½ cups) unbleached all-purpose flour

Kosher salt

1½ cups cold plain seltzer (one 12-oz. can)

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

10 to 12 squash blossoms, stamens removed (see Test Kitchen, p. 89)

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat to 200°F.

In a medium bowl, combine the flour and a heaping ¼ tsp. salt. Add the seltzer and stir to blend. The mixture should be the consistency of a semi-lumpy but loose pancake batter.

Heat the oil in a 12-inch skillet over medium heat. When a drop of batter sizzles in the pan, the oil is ready.

Holding its stem end, dip a blossom into the batter.

Swirl it around to coat. Drag the end of the blossom over the bowl's edge to remove excess batter. Gently lay the blossom in the pan and repeat with 4 or 5 more blossoms, depending on the size (don't overcrowd the pan). Cook until the blossoms are light golden-brown on the bottom, about 2 minutes. Turn the blossoms with tongs and cook until light golden-brown on the other side, about 2 minutes. Remove from the heat and transfer the blossoms to a rack covered with paper towels and set over a rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle with salt and transfer to the oven to keep warm. Return the skillet to medium heat and repeat with the remaining blossoms.

Maryellen Driscoll is a Fine Cooking contributing editor. She and her husband own Free Bird Farm, in upstate New York. □



SQUASH BLOSSOMS

If you find squash blossoms at a farmers' market you're in luck. They're deliciously edible and simple to prepare (see Test Kitchen, page 89).

EAT UP Squash blossoms will keep for one to a few days. To store for more than a day, refrigerate them—without washing—in a sealed container.

PICK YOUR OWN When harvesting squash blossoms, pick only male flowers to avoid decreasing the plant's squash yield. They have a straight stem and no pistil; female flowers have a large swelling (ovary) beneath the blossom. Harvest blossoms early in the morning when they're closed and the bees are inactive.

GET COOKING Try squash blossoms raw in salads, lightly sautéed, stuffed with cheese, or for a real delicacy, battered and fried (recipe at left).





A Pie in Hand

Sure you've had pie, but have you had it like this?

Leave your pie plates in the cupboard and try these portable, fruit-filled pockets.

BY KAREN BARKER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ALEXANDRA GRABLEWSKI



MY NORTH CAROLINA-BORN husband comes from a renowned lineage of talented bakers. If you possess superior pie-making skills, you're deemed to have "the gift." The hand pie, an individual grab-and-go pastry, is held in especially high regard by the women in his family, Grandmother Louise and Aunt Ruth among them. Knowing this, I vowed to carry on the tradition.

The simple beauty of hand pies is that they're meant to be eaten on the go, literally *out of hand*—no utensils (or sharing) required. They're easy to transport: Take them on a picnic, to a bake sale, or to a potluck. And they're a real treat at any time of day.

Hand pies make a great showcase for the season's best fruit, but a luscious filling is only half of the pie equation. Equally important is the crust, which needs to be rich, flaky, and delicious but still firm enough to hold onto. Each of these doughs meets those expectations, and my pastry pointers help ensure that you'll achieve hand pie success—*my* gift to you.

Sweet and Spicy Fried Peach Pies are dredged in cinnamon-sugar and left to cool (recipe, page 73).

PASTRY POINTER



FLAKIER CRUST

Graham cracker crumbs sprinkled in the center of each dough round soak up juices released by the fruit during baking, preventing soggy bottoms.





rustic fig and raspberry mini crostatas

An inspired combination of figs, raspberries, fresh thyme, orange zest, and honey makes these Italian-style pies an unexpected change from the familiar.

Yields 10

FOR THE DOUGH

- 7½ oz. (1½ cups) unbleached all-purpose flour**
- 3¾ oz. (¾ cup) whole-wheat flour**
- ¼ cup plus ½ Tbs. granulated sugar**
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon**
- ½ tsp. kosher salt**
- 9 oz. (1 cup plus 2 Tbs.) cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces**

FOR THE FILLING

- ¾ lb. small fresh figs (preferably Brown Turkey), quartered (about 2 cups)**
- 6 oz. fresh raspberries (1½ cups)**
- ¼ cup plus 2 Tbs. granulated sugar**
- 3 Tbs. plus 1 tsp. honey**
- 1 Tbs. fresh thyme, roughly chopped**
- 2 tsp. finely grated orange zest**
- 3 Tbs. plus 1 tsp. graham cracker crumbs**
- 1 oz. (2 Tbs.) cold unsalted butter, cut into 10 thin slices**
- 1½ Tbs. heavy cream**

MAKE THE DOUGH

Put the flours, sugar, cinnamon, and salt in a food processor. Add the butter and pulse in short bursts until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Add 3 Tbs. cold water and pulse. If the mixture seems dry, add water 1 Tbs. at a time, pulsing until the dough just starts to come together. Do not overprocess. Turn the dough out onto a clean work surface, gather it together, and portion it into ten 2½-oz. rounds. Flatten them into disks, wrap individually in plastic, and refrigerate for at least 2 hours and up to 3 days.

When ready to bake, position racks in the bottom and top thirds of the oven and heat the oven to 400°F. Line 2 large rimmed baking sheets with parchment.

On a lightly floured surface with a lightly floured rolling pin, roll each dough disk into a 5½-inch round that's about ⅛ inch thick. Put 5 rounds on each baking sheet.

MAKE THE FILLING

In a medium bowl, lightly toss the figs, raspberries, ¼ cup of the sugar, the honey, thyme, and orange zest until combined.

ASSEMBLE AND BAKE THE CROSTATAS

Sprinkle each round of dough with 1 tsp. graham cracker crumbs, leaving a ½-inch border. Put a generous ¼ cup of the fig mixture in the center of each dough round, mounding the fruit. Top each tart with a butter slice.

Fold the edges of the dough over some of the fruit to create a 1-inch rim, leaving the center exposed. Work your way around, pleating the dough as you go. With a pastry brush, brush the crust of each crostata with cream and sprinkle the crusts and filling with the remaining 2 Tbs. sugar.

Bake until the crostatas are golden-brown, 30 to 35 minutes, swapping and rotating the baking sheets' positions about halfway through baking.

Transfer the baking sheets to racks to cool for about 5 minutes. Then loosen the crostatas with an offset spatula and cool completely on the sheets. The crostatas are best the day they're made.

Dough on Demand

Because you never know when you'll come across a glut of your favorite summer fruit, you might want to keep a stash of prepared dough in the freezer. Each of the doughs in these recipes can be frozen for up to three months. Here are a few tips for freezer success.

- Tightly wrap the dough in at least two layers of plastic. Wrap masking tape around the plastic and label with the type of dough and the date it was made. Put the dough in a zip-top bag, seal, and freeze.

- For hand pies that require circles or rectangles of dough, you can also roll out and cut the dough to size, then stack the pieces of dough (no more than six high), layering a square of parchment between each one.

Wrap in plastic and freeze as described at left.

- Defrost a batch of dough overnight in the refrigerator and then unwrap and roll out. For dough that has been cut

prior to freezing, separate the frozen pieces and put them on their parchment bases on the kitchen counter. Thaw at room temperature, about 15 minutes, and then refrigerate for 10 to 15 minutes before filling.

blackberry-apple turnovers

With a dense crispness and a high sugar-to-acid ratio, Pink Lady apples are ideal for these pies. Even when tender, they hold their shape and retain some firmness, for a nice contrast to the juicy, collapsed berries.

Yields 12

FOR THE DOUGH

- 11¼ oz. (2½ cups) unbleached all-purpose flour**
- 2 Tbs. granulated sugar**
- ½ tsp. kosher salt**
- 6 oz. (¾ cup) cold unsalted butter, cut into 12 pieces**
- 6 oz. cold cream cheese, cut into 6 pieces**
- ½ cup heavy cream**

FOR THE FILLING

- 6 oz. (1½ cups) blackberries, halved**
- 1 large Pink Lady apple, peeled, cored, and cut into ¼-inch dice**
- ½ cup light brown sugar**
- 1 Tbs. unbleached all-purpose flour**
- ½ tsp. ground allspice**
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt**

FOR ASSEMBLY

- 1 large egg yolk**
- Granulated sugar**

MAKE THE DOUGH

Put the flour, sugar, and salt in a food processor. Add the butter and cream cheese and pulse until the mixture resembles coarse meal, 8 to 10 pulses. Add the cream and pulse, pausing to scrape the bowl once or twice, just until the dough starts to come together, 8 to 10 pulses more. Do not over-process. Turn the dough out onto a clean work surface, gather it together, and pat it into a rectangle. Wrap it in plastic and refrigerate for at least 2 hours and up to 3 days.

When ready to bake, position racks in the bottom and top thirds of the oven and heat the oven to 400°F. Line 2 large rimmed baking sheets with parchment.

On a lightly floured surface with a lightly floured rolling pin, roll the dough into a 13x18-inch rectangle. Be sure to loosen the dough several times and reflower underneath so it doesn't stick. Trim the edges straight to form a 12x16-inch rectangle and cut the dough into twelve 4-inch squares. Put six squares on each baking sheet.

MAKE THE FILLING

In a medium bowl, lightly toss the blackberries, apple, brown sugar, flour, allspice, and salt until combined.

ASSEMBLE AND BAKE THE TURNOVERS

In a small bowl, beat the egg yolk with 1 tsp. water. Brush the outer edges of each dough square with egg wash. Spoon 2 rounded Tbs. of the filling into the center of each square.

Bring the points together into a triangular shape, pressing to seal the edges. Lightly brush the top of each turnover with egg wash and sprinkle with a scant ½ tsp. granulated sugar. With the tip of a paring knife, cut a steam vent in the center of the top crust of each turnover.

Bake until the turnovers are browned and the filling is bubbling, 25 to 30 minutes, swapping and rotating the baking sheets' positions about halfway through baking. (Don't worry if juice leaks out.)

Transfer the baking sheets to racks and allow to cool for 5 minutes. Then loosen the turnovers with an offset spatula and cool completely on the sheets. The turnovers are best the day they're made.

PASTRY POINTER



IN THE POCKET

Cup a dough square in one hand to create a triangular pocket. Fill the dough with your other hand, pull the corners up to form a triangle, and pinch to seal.



sweet and spicy fried peach pies

Fried hand pies are a southern tradition; this one makes the most of summer peaches.

Yields 12

FOR THE DOUGH

- 11¼ oz. (2½ cups) unbleached all-purpose flour
- 2½ tsp. granulated sugar
- ¾ tsp. kosher salt
- 4½ oz. (9 Tbs.) cold unsalted butter, cut into 16 pieces
- ¼ cup plus 3 Tbs. whole milk
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice

FOR THE FILLING

- 1 lb. 2 oz. firm-ripe peaches (2 large), peeled, pitted, and cut into ½-inch dice (2½ cups)
- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- 2 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- ½ Tbs. cornstarch
- 1½ Tbs. hot pepper jelly
- 1½ tsp. cinnamon
- Pinch plus ½ tsp. cayenne
- Peanut or canola oil, for frying

MAKE THE DOUGH

Put the flour, sugar, and salt in a food processor. Add the butter and pulse until the mixture resembles coarse meal, 8 to 10 pulses. Add the milk and lemon juice and pulse until the dough just starts to come together, 8 to 10 pulses more. Do not overprocess. Turn the dough out onto a clean work surface, gather it into a rectangle, and flatten slightly. Wrap it in plastic and refrigerate for at least 2 hours and up to 3 days.

Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment. On a lightly floured surface with a lightly floured rolling pin, roll out the dough until it's ⅛ inch thick. Cut the dough with a 4-inch round cookie cutter into 12 circles. (If necessary, gather the scraps and reroll once.) Shingle the dough on the prepared baking sheet. Refrigerate.

MAKE THE FILLING

Prepare an ice bath by filling a large bowl with several inches of ice water. Set a smaller metal bowl in the water.

In a heavy-duty 3-quart saucepan, combine the peaches with ½ cup of the sugar, the lemon juice, and salt. Cook over medium-low heat until the peaches have softened and released some of their juices, about 5 minutes.

In a small bowl, combine the cornstarch with 1 Tbs. cold water. Add the slurry to the peach mixture and cook over medium-low heat until thickened, about 1 minute. Add the hot pepper jelly, ⅛ tsp. cinnamon, and a pinch of cayenne. Remove from the heat and stir to blend. Transfer the mixture to the bowl in the ice bath and cool.

ASSEMBLE THE PIES

Brush the perimeter of each dough round with water. Put a rounded tablespoon of filling in the center of each round. Fold the dough in half to form a half-moon shape and pinch the edges together to seal. Refrigerate, covered, for at least 15 minutes and up to 24 hours before frying.

FRY THE PIES

Combine the remaining 1 cup sugar, 1 tsp. cinnamon, and ⅛ teaspoon cayenne in a shallow bowl and reserve.

Have ready a large rimmed baking sheet lined with paper towels. Fill a 10-inch skillet (preferably cast iron) with ½ inch of oil. Clip a candy thermometer to the side of the pan, making sure it doesn't touch the bottom. Heat the oil to 365°F and fry the pies in two batches until golden-brown, 1 to 1½ minutes per side. With a slotted spoon, remove the pies from the pan, drain on the paper-towel-lined baking sheet, and then dredge in the cinnamon-sugar. Serve warm or at room temperature. These pies are best the day they're made.

PASTRY POINTER



ACID AID

The lemon juice in the pastry helps produce a flaky, tender crust. Gluten, responsible for tough pastry, develops when flour is combined with liquids. The addition of an acid inhibits this process.



brandied apricot-almond slab pie

Slab pies are like giant Pop-Tarts designed to feed a crowd. As the pie cools, the filling—made with both fresh *and* dried apricots—firms up enough that the slices can be eaten out of hand.

Yields 1 large pie; serves 10

FOR THE DOUGH

- 15 oz. (3½ cups) unbleached all-purpose flour
- 3 Tbs. granulated sugar
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 9 oz. (1 cup plus 2 Tbs.) cold unsalted butter, cut into 18 pieces
- 1½ oz. (3 Tbs.) cold vegetable shortening, cut into 3 pieces

FOR THE FILLING

- 10½ oz. (about 2 cups) dried apricots, coarsely chopped
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- ¾ cup dry white wine
- ¼ cup orange juice

- 12 oz. fresh apricots (about 6 small), pitted and sliced

- 1¼ tsp. fresh lemon juice

- 3½ oz. (1 cup) sliced almonds, toasted

- 1½ Tbs. brandy

- ¼ tsp. pure almond extract

FOR ASSEMBLY

- 1 large egg yolk
- 2 oz. (½ cup) confectioners' sugar, sifted
- 1½ Tbs. heavy cream or whole milk
- ½ tsp. pure vanilla extract

MAKE THE DOUGH

Put the flour, sugar, and salt in a food processor. Add the butter and vegetable shortening and pulse until the mixture resembles coarse meal, 10 to 12 pulses. Sprinkle ½ cup cold water over the mixture and pulse until the dough just starts to come together, 8 to 10 pulses more. If the mixture seems dry, add more water 1 tsp. at a time. Do not overprocess.

Turn the dough out onto a clean work surface, and gather it into a rectangle that's about 8 by 12 inches. Flatten slightly, wrap in plastic and refrigerate for at least 2 hours and up to 3 days.

MAKE THE FILLING

In a heavy-duty 4-quart saucepan, combine the dried apricots, sugar, wine, orange juice, and ¾ cup water. Simmer over medium-low heat, stirring often, until the apricots are very tender and can be mashed with a wooden spoon, 40 to 45 minutes. Add more water if the apricots are still not soft after most of the liquid has evaporated. The mixture should get thick and syrupy; don't let it scorch. Add the fresh apricots and lemon juice and cook, stirring often, until very soft, about 10 minutes. Mash the mixture with a wooden spoon or potato masher so that it has a thick, jam-like consistency. Remove from the heat.

Stir ¾ cup of the almonds, the brandy, and almond extract into the apricot mixture. Cool



to room temperature and set aside. (The filling can be made, covered, and refrigerated up to 2 days ahead.)

ASSEMBLE AND BAKE THE PIE

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 375°F. Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment. In a small bowl, beat the egg yolk with 1 tsp. water.

On a lightly floured surface with a lightly floured rolling pin, roll the dough into a $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-thick, 12x18-inch rectangle. Be sure to loosen the dough several times and re-flour underneath so that it doesn't stick. Trim the dough into an 11x16-inch rectangle and transfer it to the baking sheet. Turn the baking sheet so that a long side faces you, and brush the edges of the dough with the egg wash. Spread the apricot filling evenly over the bottom half of the dough, leaving a $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch border. Fold the top half of the dough over the filling, pressing along the edges to secure the sides. Press lightly along the edges

with the back of a fork to seal. Brush egg wash all over the top of the dough. Using a paring knife, cut 5 small steam vents in the dough at about 3-inch intervals.

Bake until the pie is golden-brown, 55 minutes. Transfer to a rack to cool completely.

In a small bowl, mix the confectioners' sugar, cream, and vanilla extract to form a smooth glaze that's just fluid enough to drizzle. With a spoon, drizzle the glaze over the top of the pie and immediately sprinkle with the remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup almonds. Allow to set for at least 2 hours before serving.

When ready to serve, use a serrated knife to cut the pie. The pie is best eaten the day it's made, but it will keep for 1 day, well wrapped, at room temperature.

Karen Barker and her husband, Ben, are owners of Magnolia Grill, in Durham, North Carolina, where she is pastry chef. ▣

PASTRY POINTER



SEAL RIGHT

To seal the filled pie, press the fork down gently, just enough to create a good bond (and a pretty crimped effect), but not so hard that it pushes through to the second layer of dough or pierces it, which may cause the filling to leak.

Potato Salad

One easy method, endless flavor variations.

BY ALLISON EHRI KREITLER

MY MOM DOESN'T COOK MUCH, but she makes a mean potato salad—it's the dish everyone in my family talks about. It's a classic, with mayo, hard-boiled eggs, and the perfect balance of acidity. Unfortunately, she makes it only for special occasions. Maybe that's why I make potato salad for *every* occasion.

The beauty of this popular summer side dish is that your ingredient options are virtually endless, and that's because potatoes mix well with just about everything, from ordinary Cheddar and onions to fancy smoked salmon or lobster. And whether dinner is all-American or inspired by an exotic cuisine, potato salad can easily adapt; just customize your salad's flavors to go with whatever's on the menu.

Here's how: First, choose your ingredients, looking to the favorites on pages 82–83 for inspiration. Next, make a tangy or creamy dressing, adjusting it with different vinegars, dairy options, aromatics, herbs, and spices. Toss your warm, cooked potatoes with salt and vinegar, which infuses them with flavor right from the get-go, and all that's left is to fold in the rest of the ingredients. Now you're ready to create a potato salad worth talking about.



This classic version combines Yukon Golds, onion, celery, eggs, and capers with a creamy Champagne vinegar dressing. For more flavor options, turn to pages 82–83.



STEP 1

CHOOSE YOUR INGREDIENTS

Read the method from start to finish and then choose and prep your ingredients.

All potato salads serve 8 as a side dish.



STEP 2

COOK THE POTATOES

¼ cup plain rice vinegar

Kosher salt

3½ lb. medium waxy potatoes, such as Yukon Gold or red (about 9), scrubbed clean (or substitute 3¼ lb. baby potatoes)

Combine the vinegar and 2 tsp. salt in a large bowl. Let sit to dissolve the salt. Put the potatoes and 2 Tbs. salt in a 6-quart pot and add enough cold water to cover by 1 inch. Bring to a boil over high heat and reduce the heat to maintain a simmer. Cook the potatoes until barely tender when poked with a fork or skewer, 20 to 25 minutes. If the potatoes aren't all the same size, remove them as they are cooked. (Baby potatoes will take 5 to 10 minutes.)

Gently drain the potatoes in a colander and set aside until just cool enough to handle. Using a paring knife, peel the potatoes by scraping off the skin. (Skip this step if using baby potatoes.) Cut the potatoes into ¾-inch chunks. Add the potatoes to the bowl with the vinegar and gently stir with a spatula to coat. With your fingers, pull apart any pieces that are stuck together.



Try the interactive Recipe Maker at FineCooking.com/extras to make your potato salad.

STEP 3

MAKE THE DRESSING

While the potatoes are cooking and cooling, make the dressing. You can choose a **creamy dressing** or a **vinaigrette**.

creamy dressing

¾ cup mayonnaise OR ½ cup mayonnaise plus ½ cup sour cream, crème fraîche, buttermilk, or plain yogurt

3 Tbs. vinegar (red or white wine, Champagne, balsamic, or cider) or 2 Tbs. fresh lemon or lime juice

1 tsp. kosher salt

½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

Dressing Add-Ins of choice (optional)

Whisk all the ingredients together in a small bowl.

vinaigrette

¼ cup vinegar (red or white wine, Champagne, balsamic, or cider) or fresh lemon or lime juice

2 tsp. Dijon or 1 Tbs. grainy or whole-grain mustard

1 tsp. kosher salt

½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
Dressing Add-Ins of choice (optional)

Whisk the vinegar or juice, mustard, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Slowly whisk in the oil until combined. Whisk in any dressing add-ins, if using.

Dressing Add-Ins (optional)

Choose up to six of the following for either type of dressing:

Aromatics & Flavor Boosters



Anchovies,
finely chopped,
up to 2 tsp.



Chipotle in adobo,
puréed, up to 2 tsp.



Horseradish,
grated fresh or strained
jarred, up to 2 Tbs.



Fresh ginger,
finely grated, up to 2 tsp.



Lemon or lime zest,
finely grated, up to 2 tsp.



**Turbinado sugar, light
brown sugar, or honey,**
up to 1 tsp.



Orange zest,
finely grated, up to 1 tsp.



Garlic,
pressed or mashed to a
paste, up to 2 large cloves

Fresh Herbs & Spices



Fennel seeds,
lightly toasted
and ground, 1½ tsp.



**Freshly
grated nutmeg,**
¼ tsp.



Marjoram or oregano,
chopped, 2 tsp.



**Thyme, rosemary,
tarragon, or sage,**
chopped, 1 Tbs.



**Crushed
red pepper flakes,**
½ tsp.



Cumin seeds,
lightly toasted
and ground, 1½ tsp.



Coriander seeds,
lightly toasted and ground,
1½ tsp.



Smoked paprika,
½ tsp.



Curry powder,
½ tsp.



Turmeric,
½ tsp.



Caraway seeds,
lightly toasted
and ground, 1½ tsp.

STEP 4

MAKE THE SALAD

Salad Mix-Ins of choice**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

Gently fold your choice of salad mix-ins into the potatoes. A vinaigrette salad can be dressed while the potatoes are warm. For a creamy salad, let the potatoes cool to room temperature first.

If using a vinaigrette dressing, whisk it back together. Fold in enough vinaigrette or creamy dressing to generously coat the potatoes. Depending on the ingredients you choose, you may not need all of the dressing. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Serve vinaigrette salads warm or at room temperature and creamy salads at room temperature or cold. These are best served the day they are made but will keep in the refrigerator for up to 2 days.

Salad Mix-Ins

Choose up to six mix-ins for no more than 4 cups total (unless otherwise indicated, you can use up to 2 cups of any single ingredient):

Vegetables & Fruits



Frozen artichoke hearts, thawed, patted dry, cut into ¾-inch wedges, and browned in olive oil with a sprinkle of salt



Bell pepper, any color, diced



Celery, stalks thinly sliced (about 1/8 inch) and leaves roughly chopped



Dried apricots, finely diced, up to ¼ cup



Peas, fresh or frozen, blanched or thawed



Chickpeas, canned, rinsed, up to 1 cup



Red onion or shallot, small diced, up to ½ cup



Cucumber, halved, seeded, and thinly sliced



Radicchio or Belgian endive, thinly sliced



Granny Smith apple, small diced, up to 1 cup



Sugar snap peas, cut into ½-inch pieces and blanched



Mushrooms, thinly sliced and sautéed until very brown



Sweet onion, small diced, up to 1 cup



Fennel, quartered, cored, and thinly sliced crosswise



Raisins (golden or dark) or currants, up to ¼ cup



Radish, thinly sliced or diced



Green beans, trimmed, cut into 1-inch pieces and blanched



Sweet corn, fresh, blanched



Scallions, thinly sliced, up to 1 cup



Tomatoes, cherry or pear, halved or quartered



Nuts



Pine nuts,
toasted, up to ½ cup



Slivered almonds,
toasted, up to ½ cup



Coarsely chopped walnuts,
toasted, up to ½ cup

Meat, Cheese & Eggs



Bacon,
cooked and crumbled,
up to ¾ lb.



Eggs,
hard boiled and diced,
up to 4 large
(about 1½ cups)



Cold-smoked salmon,
diced, up to 1 cup



Pancetta,
small diced and cooked,
up to ½ lb.



**Cheddar, Gruyère,
aged Gouda, feta,
or blue cheese,**
grated or crumbled,
up to ¾ cup



**Hot-smoked trout
or salmon,**
shredded, up to ½ cup



Shrimp or lobster,
cooked and diced



**Smoked chicken
or turkey,**
shredded, up to ½ cup

Flavor Boosters



**Pickles
(dill, sweet, or cornichon),**
small diced, up to ¾ cup



Capers,
rinsed, chopped if large,
up to 3 Tbs.



**Fresh herbs
(basil, mint, parsley, chives,
cilantro, or dill),**
chopped or sliced, up to ¾ cup



Pepperoncini,
chopped, up to 2 Tbs.



Jalapeño,
jarred or fresh, chopped,
up to 1 Tbs.



Olives,
halved or quartered,
up to 1 cup

Favorite Potato Salads

Here are some of the delicious flavor combinations you can create.



Corn, bell pepper, and Cheddar

Dressing: Creamy, with lime juice, garlic, oregano, and cumin seed

Salad: Corn, red bell pepper, Cheddar, scallion, and cilantro



Blue cheese, apple, and walnut

Dressing: Creamy, with sour cream, red wine vinegar, and rosemary

Salad: Celery, red onion, Granny Smith apple, walnuts, and blue cheese



Bacon, pickles, and caraway

Dressing: Vinaigrette, with white wine vinegar, grainy mustard, and caraway seed

Salad: Sweet onion, bacon, dill pickle, and parsley



Shrimp, celery, and tarragon

Dressing: Creamy, with lemon juice and tarragon

Salad: Celery, shrimp, and chives



Artichoke, black olive, and mint

Dressing: Vinaigrette, with lemon juice, Dijon, garlic, crushed red pepper, and marjoram

Salad: Artichokes, mint, and black olives



Chickpeas, cilantro, and Indian spices

Dressing: Vinaigrette, with lime juice, grainy mustard, garlic, ginger, turbinado sugar, cumin and coriander seeds, and turmeric

Salad: Chickpeas and cilantro



Pancetta, peas, and mixed herbs

Dressing: Creamy, with buttermilk and lemon juice

Salad: Peas, sugar snap peas, pancetta, mint, basil, and chives



Smoked trout, sweet onion, and horseradish

Dressing: Creamy, with sour cream, lemon juice and zest, and horseradish

Salad: Sweet onion, smoked trout, and chives

Allison Ehri Kreidler is a Fine Cooking contributing editor. ▣

Bananas Foster

The boozy dessert classic from New Orleans goes head-to-head with a pastry chef's refined interpretation. Which one gets your vote?

BY POPPY TOOKER AND DEBORAH RACICOT



Back Story

Created at Brennan's in New Orleans in 1951, the dish was named after local businessman and loyal customer Richard Foster.



Take 5

Just five ingredients—dark rum, butter, brown sugar, banana liqueur, and cinnamon—make up the sauce, which takes little more than 5 minutes to cook, start to finish.



Bananarama

Bananas appear twice in this dessert: Banana quarters are cooked until caramelized, and a dash of banana liqueur helps dissolve the sugar for a smooth caramel sauce.



Flash in the Pan

A restaurant favorite, this classic is traditionally ignited in front of diners. A pinch of cinnamon is thrown into the flame for extra sparkle and fizz.



THE CLASSIC

New Orleans native and food expert Poppy Tooker shares her best-ever recipe for this flaming dessert. Her formula is foolproof: Firm, ripe bananas that won't fall apart while cooking are sautéed in a rum-infused caramel sauce and then spooned over vanilla ice cream for a treat that will have you licking the bowl.



Rum's the Word

In a nod to the original, a shot of dark rum perks up the vanilla pastry cream.



First Base

There's no need for tart pans—the rolled-out dough is frozen, then cut into rectangles and baked.



The Bitter End

In this version, a bittersweet chocolate sauce stands in for the traditional caramel.



Dressed Up

No rustic presentation here. The dessert gets artfully shingled banana slivers and piped whipped-cream rosettes.

THE UPDATE

New York pastry chef Deborah Racicot pulls apart the classic flavors and reconstructs them in a stunning tart with a double dose of chocolate. In this modern take, torched bananas and rum-spiked pastry cream are layered on a cocoa-fueled crust and drizzled with a warm chocolate sauce.

bananas foster

Serves 6 to 8

- 2 oz. (4 Tbs.) unsalted butter
- 1 cup lightly packed dark brown sugar
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ cup banana liqueur
- 4 firm-ripe bananas, peeled, halved lengthwise, then halved crosswise
- ¼ cup amber rum, such as Old New Orleans or Goslings
- 1 pint vanilla ice cream

In a 12-inch skillet, melt the butter over medium heat. Stir in the brown sugar and cinnamon and cook until moist, about 1 minute. Add the banana liqueur and cook, stirring continuously, until the grainy texture disappears and the mixture rolls off the spoon in a steady stream, 1 to 2 minutes. Put the banana quarters rounded side down in the pan. Cook until the bananas begin to soften, 2 to 3 minutes.

Turn the bananas onto their flat sides.

Remove the pan from the heat and pour in the rum. Set the pan over high heat and carefully ignite the rum with a long match or grill lighter. (For safety tips on flambéing, see Test Kitchen, p. 89.) Gently shake the pan until the flame subsides. Remove from the heat.

Place a generous scoop of ice cream in 6 to 8 individual heatproof dessert bowls. Arrange 2 to 3 pieces of sautéed banana around each scoop of ice cream. Spoon on the sauce and serve immediately.

The rum in the caramel sauce is ignited for the dessert's famous flambé.



Which version is your favorite? Go to [FineCooking.com/extras](https://www.finecooking.com/extras) and let us know.

POPPY TOOKER SAYS,

"This recipe traveled with me from New Orleans to my college dorm in California, where I made it on a hot plate, and to European cooking schools. Simple but unforgettable, it just can't be improved."

banana cream tarts with chocolate sauce

Yields 10 tarts

FOR THE CHOCOLATE CRUST

- 7½ oz. (1¼ cups) unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 oz. (⅓ cup) unsweetened Dutch-processed cocoa powder
- 6 oz. (¾ cup) cold unsalted butter, diced
- 1¼ oz. (6 Tbs.) confectioners' sugar
- 1 large egg

FOR THE PASTRY CREAM

- 2 cups whole milk
- 6 large egg yolks
- ¾ cup granulated sugar
- 1¼ oz. (5 Tbs.) cornstarch
- 2 tsp. dark rum
- 1 vanilla bean, split and seeds scraped out
- ½ oz. (1 Tbs.) unsalted butter, softened

FOR THE CHOCOLATE SAUCE

- ½ lb. extra-bitter chocolate (67% to 72% cacao), preferably Valrhona, coarsely chopped
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- ¼ cup whole milk
- 2 Tbs. light corn syrup
- 1 oz. (2 Tbs.) unsalted butter

FOR THE WHIPPED CREAM

- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 Tbs. confectioners' sugar
- ½ tsp. pure vanilla extract

FOR ASSEMBLY

- 4 to 6 large ripe bananas (7 to 8 oz. each)
- 10 tsp. turbinado sugar
- Dutch-processed cocoa powder
- Mint leaves (optional)
- Rum-raisin ice cream, preferably Häagen-Dazs

DEBORAH RACICOT SAYS,

"For me, the secret to a great dessert is in the texture. So I turned the classic into a tart where a crumbly chocolate crust meets creamy bananas."

MAKE THE CHOCOLATE DOUGH

Sift the flour and cocoa powder into a medium bowl.

In a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, cream the butter and sugar on medium speed until smooth, 3 to 4 minutes. Scrape the sides of the mixing bowl. Add the egg and beat well. In two batches, add the flour mixture and mix on medium-low speed until incorporated.

Scrape the dough onto plastic wrap, shape into a flat square, and wrap well. Refrigerate the dough for at least 4 hours or overnight.

MAKE THE PASTRY CREAM

In a medium saucepan, heat the milk over medium-high heat until small bubbles form around the edges, about 3 minutes. Remove from the heat. In a medium bowl, whisk the yolks, sugar, cornstarch, rum, and vanilla seeds. Slowly whisk in the milk. Pour the mixture back into the pan and stir well. On medium heat, whisk until it boils and becomes thick and shiny, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer to a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Add the butter and mix on medium speed until smooth, about 1 minute. Pass the cream through a fine sieve into a shallow bowl. Transfer to a disposable pastry bag. Squeeze it down to the tip and refrigerate until ready to use. (The pastry cream can be made up to 1 day ahead.)

MAKE THE CHOCOLATE SAUCE

Put the chocolate in a medium heatproof bowl. In a medium saucepan, heat the heavy cream, milk, corn syrup, and butter over medium heat. When steaming hot, pour the cream mixture over the chocolate and let sit for 5 minutes. Whisk until smooth. Set aside.

BAKE THE CRUSTS

Position a rack in the center of the oven and heat the oven to 350°F.

Between two large sheets of parchment, roll the dough out into a ¼-inch-thick rectangle that's about 13½x10 inches. Slide it onto a rimmed baking sheet and freeze. Once the dough is firm, after about 30 minutes, trim to 12½x9 inches and then cut it into ten 2½x4½-inch rectangles. Arrange on a rimmed baking sheet and bake until set and dry, 10 to 15 minutes, rotating the pan after 5 minutes. Cool completely on the baking sheet on a rack.

WHIP THE CREAM

In a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat the cream on medium speed until it starts to thicken, about 2 minutes. Add the sugar and continue to beat until soft peaks form, about 1 minute. Add the vanilla and

Pastry cream is piped onto the chocolate bases before the banana slices are arranged.

switch to a hand whisk, whipping until the cream forms stiff peaks.

ASSEMBLE THE TARTS

In a small saucepan, gently warm the chocolate sauce over low heat.

Cut a ½-inch hole at the tip of the bag of pastry cream. Pipe the cream in a zigzag pattern across each tart crust to cover completely.

Peel and cut the bananas into 2½-inch lengths, then slice them lengthwise ⅓ inch thick. Shingle the bananas across the pastry cream. Sprinkle each tart with 1 tsp. turbinado sugar. Pass the flame of a small kitchen torch over the bananas until the sugar bubbles and caramelizes. Let cool briefly.

Transfer the whipped cream to another pastry bag, fitted with a star tip, and pipe a string of ½-inch rosettes down one long side of each tart over the bananas. Dust with cocoa powder. Garnish with mint leaves (if using).

Serve the tarts with a scoop of ice cream on the side. Pour the warm chocolate sauce over the tart at the table.

Poppy Tooker has taught classes in traditional Louisiana cuisine for more than 25 years. Deborah Racicot is the pastry chef at New York City's Gotham Bar and Grill. ■

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TECHNIQUE

How to prep squash blossoms

To make the Fried Squash Blossoms on page 67, the delicate flowers need a little prep. Begin by inspecting the blossoms for insects, and then wash and gently pat them dry. Insert your index finger into each blossom to snap off and remove the stamen. Don't worry if the petals tear slightly in the process. —Maryellen Driscoll



INGREDIENT

Salt cod

Salt-dried cod goes by many names in western Europe, where it's a staple: it's *bacalhau* in Portugal, *baccalà* in Italy, *bacalao* in Spain, and *morue* in France.

The story behind its popularity is one for the history books, but the short version is this: Take the high demand for fish due to the large number of meatless days in the Catholic calendar; add the discovery of a vast supply of cod in the waters off Newfoundland and the need to preserve the fish for transport to Europe, and it's easy to see how salt cod became so important.

Preservation aside, salt-drying improves the flavor and texture of the otherwise bland codfish, making it flaky and toothsome. Famous salt cod dishes include *brandade de morue* (a salt cod, garlic, and olive oil spread from Provence), *bacalao con patatas* (Spanish potatoes baked with salt cod), and *bacalao al pil pil* (Basque salt cod in an emulsified garlic and oil sauce). In Portugal, *pastéis de bacalhau*—salt cod fritters (like the ones on page 42)—are ubiquitous. If you have leftover salt cod from making the fritters, the chowder at right is a great way to use it up.

Some supermarkets carry salt cod—look for it in the seafood section, near the smoked salmon. Stored in a zip-top bag in the fridge, it'll keep for a year or more. Regardless of what you're making, you'll need to first rinse and soak it in several changes of cold water for 12 to 36 hours to rehydrate it and remove enough salt to make it palatable. After soaking, give it a quick simmer in water or milk until it's soft enough to flake, remove the skin and bones, and it's ready to use. —Jennifer Armentrout

salt cod and corn chowder

Serve with oyster crackers if you like.

Yields 7 cups; serves 4 to 6

- 8 oz. dried salt cod
- 1 tsp. olive oil
- 2 oz. salt pork, cut into small dice (about ½ cup)
- 1 small yellow onion, cut into small dice (about 1 cup)
- 1 medium stalk celery, cut into small dice (about ½ cup)
- Kosher salt
- 2 medium red potatoes, cut into small dice (about 2 cups)
- 1½ cups fresh corn kernels (from 3 ears)
- 2 8-fl.-oz. bottles clam juice
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 bay leaf, preferably fresh
- 1 cup heavy cream
- ¾ cup whole milk
- Freshly ground black pepper

One day ahead, rinse the salt cod, put it in a large bowl, and cover with cold water. Cover with plastic and refrigerate for 24 hours, changing the water several times.

In a 4-quart saucepan, bring 6 cups of water to a boil over high heat. Add the soaked cod, and simmer gently over low heat until it flakes easily with a fork, 10 to 20 minutes, depending on thickness. Drain and cool. Remove and discard the skin, bones, and any spongy ends. Shred the cod into pieces.

In a 6-quart Dutch oven, heat the oil over medium heat. Add the salt pork and cook, stirring occasionally, until crisp, 4 to 6 minutes. Transfer with a slotted spoon to a plate lined with paper towels. Add the onion, celery, and a pinch of salt to the pot and cook until the vegetables are tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in the potatoes and corn. Add 2 cups water, the clam juice, thyme, and bay leaf. Adjust the heat as necessary to reach a simmer and cook until the potatoes are just tender, 10 to 12 minutes. Stir in the salt cod, salt pork, heavy cream, and milk. Heat to a gentle simmer, but don't boil. Remove the bay leaf and thyme sprig, and season to taste with salt and pepper before serving.

—Melissa Pellegrino



TIP

Perfectly cooked potatoes

Nothing ruins a potato salad (see page 76) quicker than underdone potatoes. To check potatoes for doneness, pierce them with a fork or a skewer, which should slide in easily. Don't use a paring knife; its sharp tip cuts into the potatoes, making them feel tenderer than they are. And since potatoes cook at different rates depending on size, check several before deciding whether they're done or not. —J. A.



TIPS

Flambéing safely

A fire in the kitchen is usually bad news, but in this issue we're starting a couple of fires on purpose. The Bananas Foster on page 86 and the Fireman's Sausage on page 43 are both ignited. If you're new to flambéing, here are tips for pulling it off safely.

1. Pull the pan off the burner before adding the alcohol, or the alcohol may ignite before you're done pouring.
2. Return the pan to the stove to ignite, unless you have a built-in microwave or anything combustible above the stove. In this case, move the pan to a spot with plenty of clearance.
3. Have a metal lid nearby to snuff the fire if it gets out of hand.
4. Use a long match or a long-handled lighter, but don't light it until the alcohol is in the pan.
5. Ignite the fumes at the edge of the pan, not the liquid alcohol.
6. Don't lean over the pan, and keep your face turned away slightly. Pull your hand back as soon as the flames appear.
7. Alcohol must be hot in order to ignite. If the alcohol resists igniting, heat it for a few seconds before trying again.

—J. A.



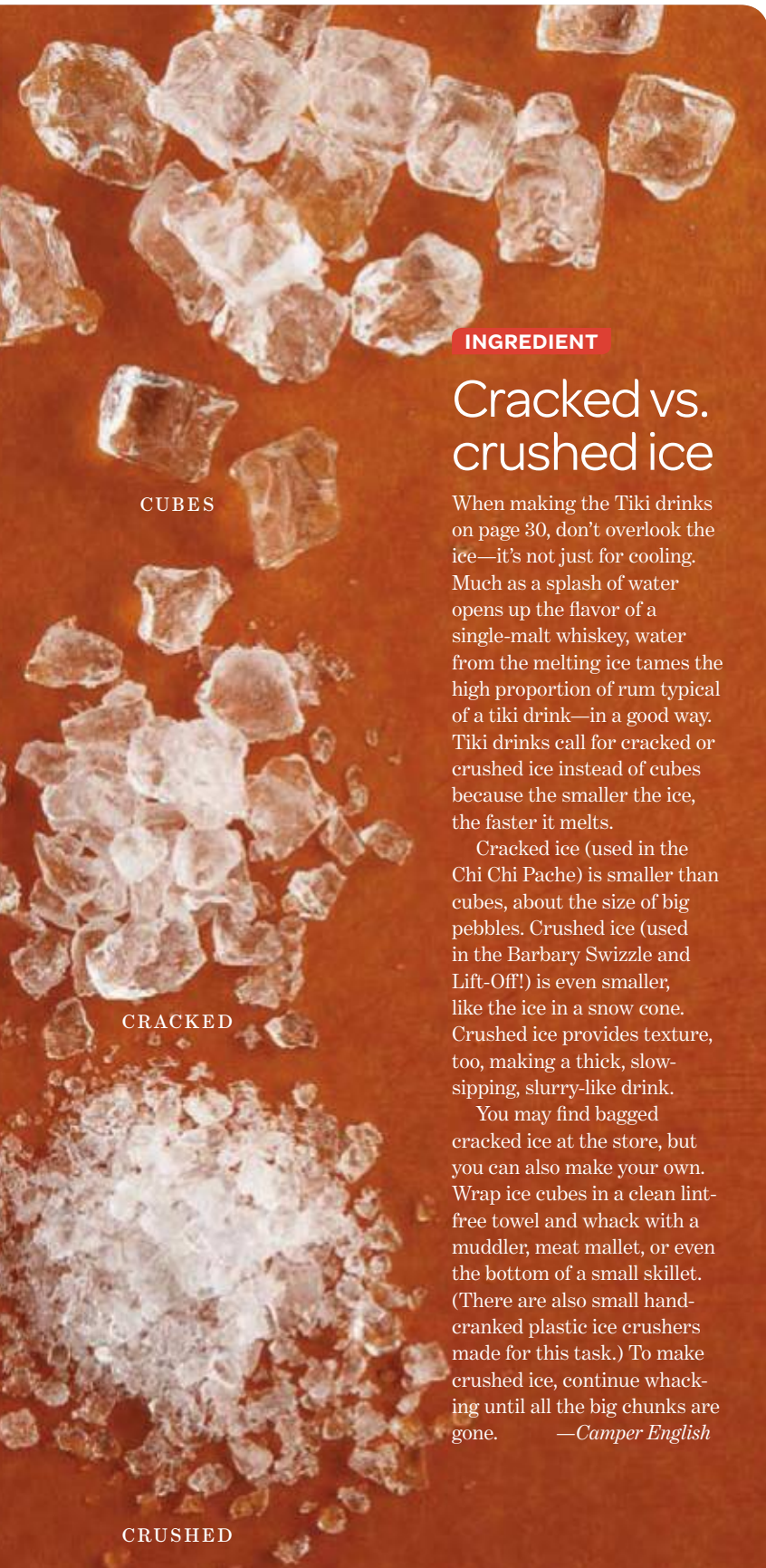
EQUIPMENT

Tomato press

To make the tomato purée on page 20, you'll need a tool to strain and separate the tomato pulp from the skins and seeds. A food mill does this well enough, but we especially love this Italian tomato press for how easily and speedily it gets the job done. With a food mill, you have to stop frequently to clean out the skins and seeds. The tomato press is designed to spit them out as you work. You load your tomatoes into the large hopper on top and turn the crank. Tomato purée pours from one chute, while the seeds and skins fall from another chute—no stopping required, except to empty the catch bowls as they quickly fill up.

There are several brands of tomato presses available, but we're partial to this red plastic model from Rigamonti with its sturdy suction-cup base, nearly effortless crank action, and ease of assembly (once you get the hang of it). Cleaning is a little tedious—it must be handwashed—but the time you save on milling your tomatoes (or other soft vegetables and fruits) makes up for it.

—J. A.



INGREDIENT

Cracked vs. crushed ice

When making the Tiki drinks on page 30, don't overlook the ice—it's not just for cooling. Much as a splash of water opens up the flavor of a single-malt whiskey, water from the melting ice tames the high proportion of rum typical of a tiki drink—in a good way. Tiki drinks call for cracked or crushed ice instead of cubes because the smaller the ice, the faster it melts.

Cracked ice (used in the Chi Chi Pache) is smaller than cubes, about the size of big pebbles. Crushed ice (used in the Barbary Swizzle and Lift-Off!) is even smaller, like the ice in a snow cone. Crushed ice provides texture, too, making a thick, slow-sipping, slurry-like drink.

You may find bagged cracked ice at the store, but you can also make your own. Wrap ice cubes in a clean lint-free towel and whack with a muddler, meat mallet, or even the bottom of a small skillet. (There are also small hand-cranked plastic ice crushers made for this task.) To make crushed ice, continue whacking until all the big chunks are gone. —Camper English

INGREDIENT

Za'atar

Za'atar is both a Middle Eastern herb and a spice blend. The herb za'atar is so treasured for its savory-thyme-oregano flavor that it's called the "king of herbs." Za'atar, the spice blend, is a combination of dried za'atar, sesame seeds, ground sumac, and other herbs and spices. The blends vary from region to region, but, generally, the flavor is herbal and nutty.

The za'atar herb is rarely exported, so it's safe to assume that recipes calling for za'atar refer to the spice blend. To get to know za'atar, we suggest you order a few different varieties and try them, either by making the recipe for Sautéed Zucchini with Za'atar and Crispy Chickpeas on page 66, or by using one of the ideas below. One teaspoon of za'atar is a good starting point.

GRILLED LAMB KEBABS

Marinate lamb cubes in yogurt, za'atar, lemon zest, cumin, salt, and pepper. Wipe off the marinade, skewer the meat along with chunks of fennel, and grill. Sprinkle with a pinch of za'atar.

LENTIL SOUP Sauté diced onion, celery, carrot, za'atar, and salt in butter until tender. Add French du Puy lentils and chicken broth. Simmer gently until the lentils are tender. Garnish with parsley and serve with crusty bread.

ROASTED EGGPLANT DIP

Rub halved eggplant with oil, salt, and pepper and roast in a hot oven until tender. Scoop out the flesh and mash gently with a fork. Stir in za'atar, tahini, lemon juice, red pepper flakes, chopped mint, salt, and pepper.

GRILLED PINEAPPLE WEDGES

Grill wedges of fresh pineapple until lightly charred. Sprinkle with za'atar and a pinch of cayenne.

PISTACHIO-CRUSTED SALMON

Smear mayonnaise thinly on the top and sides of skin-on salmon fillets. Coat the salmon with a mixture of coarsely chopped pistachios, za'atar, salt, and pepper. Roast skin side down in a hot oven until cooked through.

GRILLED PITA Rub pitas with the cut sides of a halved garlic clove and then brush with olive oil. Grill until lightly toasted on both sides. Sprinkle with za'atar and salt. Cut into wedges.

—Jennifer Armentrout,
Melissa Pellegrino, and
Samantha Seneviratne

ISRAELI

LEBANESE

SYRIAN

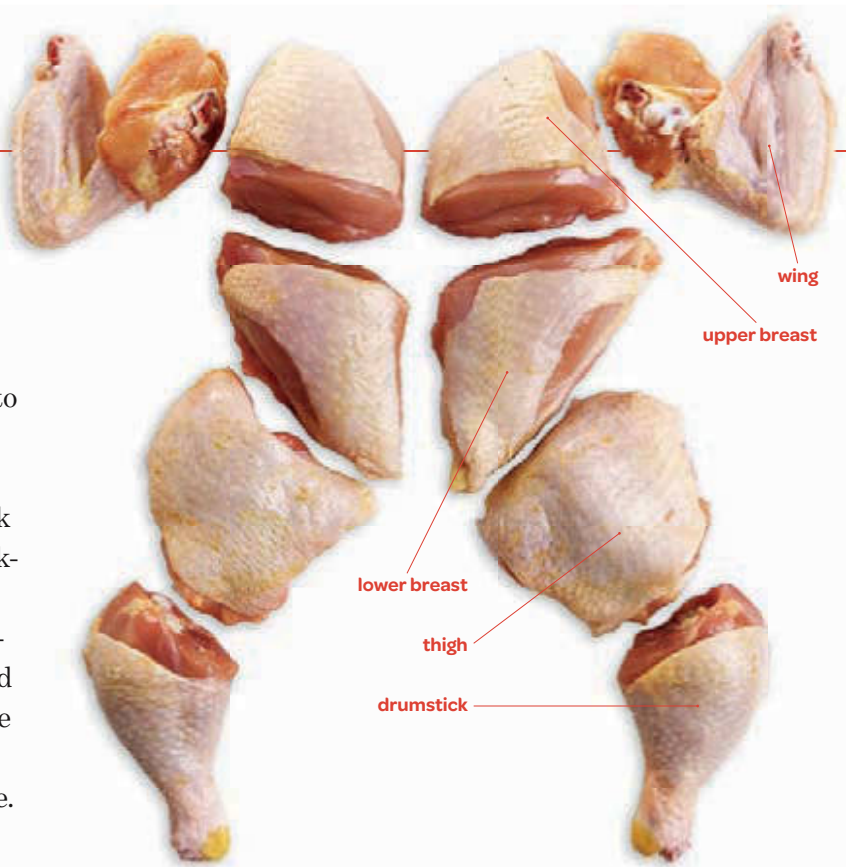
JORDANIAN



TECHNIQUE

How to cut up a chicken

The Classic Fried Chicken recipe on page 35 is a great excuse to learn how to cut a whole chicken into pieces, a skill you'll use over and over. The technique shown here yields 10 pieces, plus a back and wing tips that you can save for making stock. To modify the technique for 8 pieces, don't cut the wing into a separate piece. Instead, trim off the first and second joints of the wing (these become wing tips for stock) and leave the third joint attached to the upper breast piece.



THE LEGS



1 Extend a leg from the body and slice through the skin to expose the leg's interior.



2 Forcefully bend the leg back from the body until the ball joint pops free from the socket.



3 Cut the leg from the body, through the joint, as close as possible to the backbone. Try to cut the "oyster" away with the leg—you'll find this tasty nugget of meat just above

the joint, in an indentation on the backbone. (In the photo above, it's the round piece of meat to the right of the knife blade.) Repeat with the other leg.



4 To separate the drumstick and thigh, look for the line of fat between them—it marks the location of the joint you need to cut through.

THE BREAST



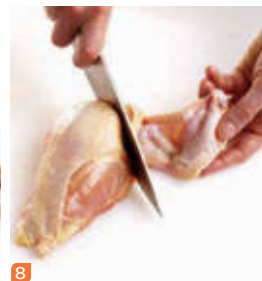
5 With poultry shears, cut through the ribs and collarbone on both sides to remove the back and neck in one piece (discard this or save for stock).



6 Flip the breast skin side down and begin to split the breast from the neck end just until the knife hits the keel (breast) bone, then score down the length of the bone.



7 With your thumbs on either side of the bone, bend the breast backward until the top of the bone pokes out. With your fingers, loosen and pull the bone free. Finish splitting the breast in half by cutting where the bone was.



8 Trim off the first wing joint and then cut the remaining wing from the breast with some of the breast meat attached.



9 Cut the remaining breast in half to get two breast pieces of relatively equal size. Repeat with the other side of the breast. —J. A.



WHERE TO BUY IT

tea-smoking, page 48

- **Por Kwan Thai Iced Tea Mix (Thai tea)**, \$4.29 for 16 oz., importfood.com, 888-618-8424.
 - **Massaman curry paste**, \$1.69 for a 4-oz. can, indianfoodsc.com, 866-331-7684.
 - **Ching's Secret dark soy sauce**, \$1.99 for a 7-oz. bottle, ishopindian.com, 877-786-8876.
- From harney.com, 888-427-6398:
- **Lychee loose tea**, \$7 for a 4-oz. tin.
 - **Jasmine loose tea**, \$6.25 for a 4-oz. tin.
 - **Ti Quan Yin Spring Floral (oolong) loose tea**, \$10 for a 4-oz. tin.



midsummer bites, page 40

- **Portuguese chouriço**, Lopes Sausage Company, 973-344-3063.
- **Portuguese cheeses**, murrayscheese.com, 888-692-4339, and idealcheese.com, 800-382-0109.
- **Portuguese wines** (including Ramos Pinto white port, \$13.99 for a 750-ml bottle), klwines.com, 877-559-4637.
- **Heritage Collection Chattels 16-inch round cutting board**, \$56, jkadams.com, 800-451-6118.
- **Sea Urchin salt and pepper shakers**, \$29, potterybarn.com, 888-779-5176.
- **Mesh wire lantern/candleholder**, small \$7.95 and large \$29.95, crateandbarrel.com, 800-967-6696.
- **Location courtesy of** Norm and Joanne Gardner.

From Privet House, privethouse.com, 860-868-1800:

- **Vellum and hide tray**, \$350.
- **18-inch maple cutting board**, \$150.
- **21-inch maple cutting board**, \$180.
- **Vintage green Bakelite forks**, four-piece set, \$40.
- **Teak flatware**, five-piece set, \$55.
- **Shadow-stripe salad bowl**, \$70.
- **Cocktail glasses**, \$32 each.

From DBO Home, dbohomer.com, 860-364-6008:

- **Felicity throw**, ecru, 50x70 inches, \$220.
- **Handmade porcelain** cups, bowls, plates, and platters, \$22 to \$105.

preserving, page 20

- **OXO Good Grips food mill**, \$49.95, cooking.com, 800-663-8810.
- **Citric acid**, \$4.99 for a 4-oz. jar, now-2-u.com, 888-669-3663.

From canningpantry.com, 800-285-9044:

- **Ball pint regular Mason canning jars**, \$11.49 for a case of 12.
- **Canning jar lifter**, \$4.99.
- **Stainless-steel canning rack**, \$19.99.

fried chicken, page 34

- **Henckels Pro S 10-inch chef's knife**, \$139.95, metrokitchen.com, 888-892-9911.
- **Pyrex 1-quart measuring cup**, \$5.99, bedbathandbeyond.com, 800-462-3966.
- **Stainless-steel mixing bowl**, three-piece set, \$39.95, crateandbarrel.com, 800-967-6696.
- **Lodge Logic 12-inch cast-iron skillet**, \$33.95, lodgemfg.com, 423-837-7181.
- **CDN professional deep-fry and candy thermometer, TCG400**, \$12.95, chefsresource.com, 866-765-2433.
- **Taylor Connoisseur instant-read thermometer**, \$15.99, cookware.com, 888-478-4606.

From cooking.com, 800-663-8810:

- **Wilton 10x16-inch cooling rack**, \$9.95.
- **Cuisinart 11x17-inch nonstick baking sheet**, \$18.95.
- **OXO 12-inch stainless-steel locking tongs**, \$12.95.
- **All-Clad measuring spoons**, four-piece set, \$24.95.
- **All-Clad measuring cups**, five-piece set, \$49.95.

zucchini, page 62

- **La Tourangelle walnut oil**, \$13.99 for a 500-ml bottle, igourmet.com, 877-446-8763.
- **Brown pottery plate**, \$12.95, stockbridgeandberry.com, 203-264-2777.
- **Photographed at Holbrook Farm** in Bethel, Connecticut, holbrookfarm.net.



test kitchen, page 89

- **Za'atar spice blends**, \$5.99 for about 2 oz., kalustyans.com, 800-352-3451.
- **Italian tomato press**, \$38, williams-sonoma.com, 877-812-6235.
- **Salt cod**, \$24.95 for 12.7 oz. (1 lb. when soaked), tienda.com, 800-710-4304.



drinks, page 28

- **Appleton Estate 12-year-old Extra Jamaica Rum**, \$32.99 for a 750-ml bottle, finewinehouse.com, 877-981-6555.
- **St. Elizabeth Allspice Dram**, \$29.99 for a 750-ml bottle, shoppersvineyard.com, 973-916-0707.
- **Appleton Estate V/X Jamaica Rum**, \$18.99 for a 750-ml, garyswine.com, 888-994-2797.
- **Fee Brothers West Indies Style Falernum Mixer**, \$6.99 for a 1-liter bottle, wallywine.com, 888-992-5597.
- **Numi Moroccan mint herbal tea**, \$8.95 for 18 bags, buzzmug.com, 877-816-1626.
- **Parrot drink decoration**, \$7.
- **75th anniversary tiki mug**, \$24.95.
- **Menehune footed compote**, \$17.

From tradervicsgourmet.com, 925-675-6400:

- **Parrot drink decoration**, \$7.
 - **75th anniversary tiki mug**, \$24.95.
 - **Menehune footed compote**, \$17.
- From tradertiki.com, 530-427-8454:
- **Cinnamon syrup**, \$11.99 for a 375-ml bottle.
 - **Tiki swizzle sticks**, \$4 per dozen.



NUTRITION

Recipes	Calories (kcal)	Fat Cal (kcal)	Protein (g)	Carb (g)	Total Fat (g)	Sat Fat (g)	Mono Fat (g)	Poly Fat (g)	Chol (mg)	Sodium (mg)	Fiber (g)
EDITOR'S LETTER, P. 6											
Blueberry-Vanilla Cream Cheese Pies	110	50	2	13	6	2.5	2	0	45	80	1
ASIAN PEARS, P. 15											
Sesame Steak Salad with Asian Pears	280	140	21	15	15	3.5	6	4	50	420	5
BUFFALO MOZZARELLA, P. 18											
Eggplant, Heirloom Tomato, and Buffalo Mozzarella Stacks	360	270	13	11	30	12	14	2	60	190	5
Grilled Peach and Buffalo Mozzarella Salad	210	120	7	16	14	6	6	1	30	75	1
PRESERVING TOMATOES, P. 20											
Tomato Purée (per ½ cup)	40	5	2	9	0	0	0	0	0	10	3
Tomato Ketchup (per 1 Tbs.)	30	0	1	8	0	0	0	0	0	180	1
MAKE IT TONIGHT, P. 22											
Spicy Grilled Corn Salad with Black Beans and Queso Fresco	240	140	7	20	16	3	10	1.5	5	420	4
Frozen Hot Chocolate	310	150	5	43	17	10	4	0.5	45	85	4
Grilled Shrimp Salad with Feta, Tomato, and Watermelon	430	220	36	20	24	9	12	2.5	290	990	3
Pork Chops with Peach-Ginger Chutney	450	300	20	17	34	9	18	3.5	70	450	1
Grilled Bratwurst Sandwiches with Tomato Jam and Sauerkraut	830	390	29	79	44	13	23	4.5	85	2100	6
Egg Foo Yung with Chicken and Shiitake	350	230	22	8	26	4	14	7	350	910	1
Sirloin Steaks with Garlicky Swiss Chard	530	280	43	10	31	10	15	2	110	1320	3
Thai-Style Spicy Ground Chicken in Lettuce Cups	240	110	27	8	12	3.5	5	2	120	1130	1
TIKI DRINKS, P. 28											
Chi Chi Pache	300	60	1	26	6	6	0	0	0	15	0
Barbary Swizzle	140	0	0	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lift-Off!	250	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	10	0
FRIED CHICKEN, P. 34											
Classic Fried Chicken	350	170	36	5	19	5	8	4.5	140	390	0
GOOD LIFE, P. 38											
Greek Salad Pitas with Olive-Garlic Tapenade	420	210	12	46	23	7	13	2.5	25	1030	7
MIDSUMMER BITES, P. 40											
Warm Marinated Olives	130	120	0	4	13	1.5	9	1.5	0	410	1
Green Olive Spread (per 1 Tbs.)	110	100	1	2	11	1.5	4.5	4.5	0	160	1
Potato Skin Curls with Fresh Herbs	150	20	3	30	2.5	0	1.5	0.5	0	15	5
Gazpacho Coolers	90	45	2	11	5	0.5	3.5	0.5	0	260	2
Salt Cod and Crab Fritters (per fritter)	70	35	6	3	4	0	2	1	20	170	0
Spicy Pickled Onions	10	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
Fireman's Sausage	310	200	14	2	22	8	10	2	50	700	0
Pine Nut and Orange Cookies (per cookie)	70	35	1	9	4	0	2	1	10	15	0
TEA-SMOKING, P. 48											
Tea-Smoked Chicken Salad with Pickled Red Onions	220	70	31	5	8	1.5	3	3	85	560	1
Crisp Tea-Smoked Duck with Green Mango and Basil Salad	340	140	27	25	15	3.5	8	3	135	850	3
Tea-Smoked Salmon with Citrus-Cucumber Relish	360	140	40	14	15	2.5	5	6	105	1010	2
Coconut Noodle Soup with Tea-Smoked Shrimp	420	200	25	31	22	19	1.5	1	145	960	2
WAYS TO EAT LESS MEAT, P. 54											
Indian Summer Gratin with Butternut Squash, Corn, and Bacon	350	200	8	32	23	11	8	2	55	390	4
Spaghetti Frittata with Arugula and Fresh Herbs	320	220	13	13	25	11	9	2	325	230	1
Provençal Wheat Berry Salad with Shrimp	530	240	23	52	27	3.5	18	4	85	600	9
Southwestern Grilled Chicken Salad with Black Bean Salsa	470	290	18	28	33	5	21	5	25	510	9
Sesame-Ginger Tofu and Shiitake Kebabs	230	90	13	29	10	1	6	2	0	200	5
Mussels with Bell Peppers, Watercress, and Herbed Toasts	410	230	19	21	26	7	15	3	55	760	2
ZUCCHINI, P. 62											
Fried Squash Blossoms	110	35	2	17	4	0.5	3	0	0	35	1
Two-Color Zucchini Ribbons with Mint and Olive Vinaigrette	80	70	1	3	8	1	5	1	0	80	1
Sautéed Zucchini with Za'atar and Crispy Chickpeas	180	90	4	16	10	1.5	7	1.5	0	170	3
Grilled Zucchini with Chive Oil	240	220	1	4	25	2.5	6	16	0	150	1
HAND PIES, P. 68											
Sweet and Spicy Fried Peach Pies	270	80	3	47	9	5	2.5	1	20	75	1
Brandied Apricot-Almond Slab Pie	650	280	9	81	32	15	10	3.5	80	65	5
Blackberry-Apple Turnovers	350	190	4	38	21	13	5	1	75	125	2
Rustic Fig and Raspberry Mini Crostatas	450	220	5	55	25	15	6	1	65	75	4
POTATO SALAD, P. 76											
Classic Potato Salad	330	160	8	36	18	3	4.5	8	115	960	4
BANANAS FOSTER, P. 84											
Bananas Foster	320	100	2	50	11	7	3	0	35	40	2
Banana Cream Tarts with Chocolate Sauce	750	400	10	78	45	27	8	1.5	260	75	4
TEST KITCHEN, P. 89											
Salt Cod and Corn Chowder	430	230	29	23	25	13	9	2	125	620	3

The nutritional analyses have been calculated by a registered dietitian at Nutritional Solutions in Melville, New York. When a recipe gives a choice of ingredients, the first choice is the one used. Optional ingre-

dients with measured amounts are included; ingredients without specific quantities are not. Analyses are per serving; when a range of ingredient amounts or servings is given, the smaller amount or portion

is used. When the quantities of salt and pepper aren't specified, the analysis is based on ¼ tsp. salt and ⅓ tsp. pepper per serving for entrées, and ⅓ tsp. salt and ⅓ tsp. pepper per serving for side dishes.



MENUS

Friday with Friends

Grilled Bratwurst Sandwiches
with Tomato Jam and Sauerkraut
page 24

Potato Salad with Bacon,
Pickles, and Caraway
page 22

Warm Chocolate-Nut Brownie
FineCooking.com

*To drink: G. Schneider & Sohn Schneider
Weisse Hefe-Weizen (wheat beer)*



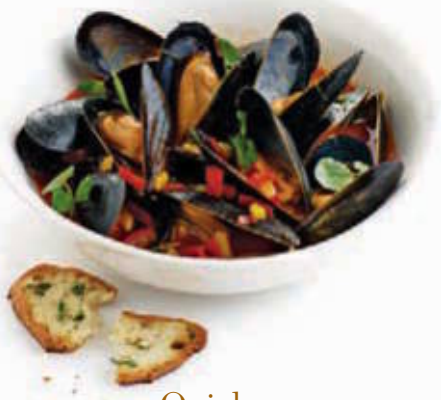
Mediterranean Lunch

Grilled Peach
and Buffalo Mozzarella Salad
page 19

Spaghetti Frittata
with Arugula and Fresh Herbs
page 57

Pine Nut and Orange Cookies
page 47

*To drink: 2009 Commanderie
de Peyrassol Côtes de Provence rosé*



Quick Weeknight Dinner

Two-Color Zucchini Ribbons
with Mint and Olive Vinaigrette
page 64

Steamed Mussels with Bell Peppers,
Watercress, and Herbed Toasts
page 61

Frozen Hot Chocolate
page 23

*To drink: Romano Clelia's dry white
2008 Fiano di Avellino Colli di Lapio*

Labor Day Picnic

Fried Chicken
page 35

Classic Potato Salad with Onion,
Celery, Eggs, and Capers
page 76

Grilled Zucchini with Chive Oil
page 65

Brandied Apricot-Almond Slab Pie
page 74

*To drink: Jack D'Or from
Pretty Things Beer and Ale Project*



Tiki Party

Lift-Off!
page 30

Chi Chi
Pache
page 30

Barbary
Swizzle
page 30

Chicken Satés
with Spicy
Peanut Sauce
FineCooking.com

Tea-Smoked Salmon
with Citrus-Cucumber
Relish
page 51

Grilled Fruit with
Coconut Sauce
FineCooking.com



Late-Summer Supper

Crostini with Buffalo Mozzarella
and Thyme-Roasted Tomatoes
page 18

Pork Chops
with Peach-Ginger Chutney
page 26

Indian Summer Gratin
with Butternut Squash,
Potatoes, Corn, and Bacon
page 56

Blackberry-Apple Turnovers
page 72

*To drink: 2008 Vercesi del Castellazzo
Pezzalunga*





















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Eggs & Tofu





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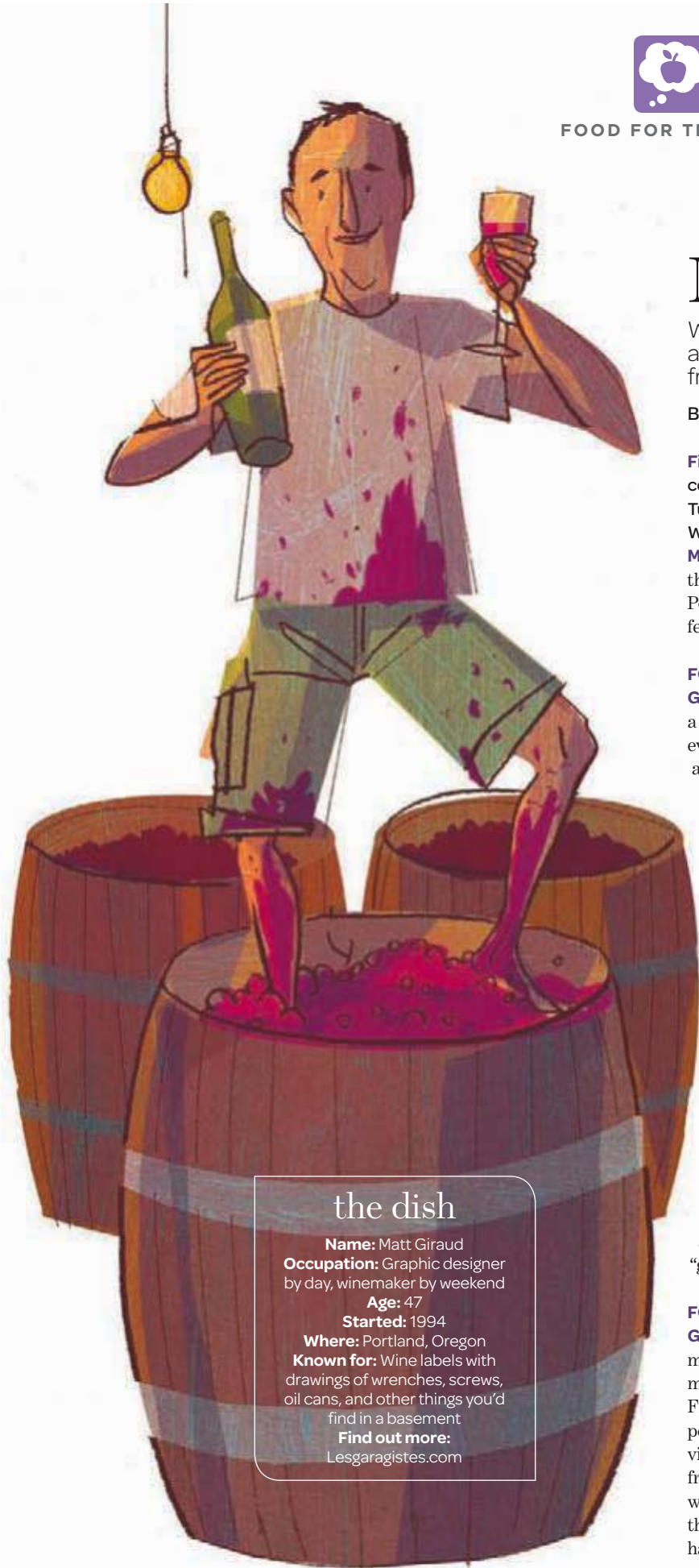
 **VEGETARIAN:** May contain eggs and dairy ingredients

 **MAKE AHEAD:** Can be completely prepared ahead (may need reheating and a garnish to serve)

 **QUICK:** Under 30 minutes



FOOD FOR THOUGHT



the dish

Name: Matt Giraud
Occupation: Graphic designer by day, winemaker by weekend
Age: 47
Started: 1994
Where: Portland, Oregon
Known for: Wine labels with drawings of wrenches, screws, oil cans, and other things you'd find in a basement
Find out more:
Lesgaragistes.com

Matt Giraud

Who needs a palatial estate and rolling vineyards? This adventurous winemaker is busy turning out top vintages from a tiny basement in the Pacific Northwest.

BY KELLY ALEXANDER

Fine Cooking: Winemaking conjures up romantic images of Tuscany, Napa, the Loire Valley. Where do you make your wine?

Matt Giraud: It all happens in the basement of my house in Portland. At 500 or 600 square feet, it's a little snug.

FC: In your basement? How?

Giraud: With lots of help. There's a group of about 20 families, and every year we pool our resources and buy grapes. We crush them in the driveway and then funnel them down into fermenters in my basement. My neighbors tolerantly look the other way as trucks with 1,500 pounds of grapes back into my driveway.

FC: How much wine do you make?

Giraud: About 150 cases a year of different varietals, like Cabernet Sauvignon and Syrah, mainly from eastern Washington. We also make a blend, which we age for 18 months. That's our "Peugeot." We name wines after what you might find in a French garage, since we are "garagistes."

FC: What's a garagiste?

Giraud: It's a person who makes wine in his garage. The movement started in southern France in the mid-nineties; people unable to afford their own vineyards started buying grapes from the growers and making wine in their garages. Some of the wines were incredible. They have a cult following.

FC: But you're not in a garage.

Giraud: A garage band doesn't have to practice in a garage, so we figure we can get away with calling ourselves garagistes.

FC: How does your wife feel about all this?

Giraud: She's not really into it (though she does like the yeasty smell that fills the house early in the process). In deference to her, I rearranged our basement so the splattering wine doesn't rain down on our laundry.

FC: Any advantage to living above the winery?

Giraud: One of the first signs that something is going wrong with the wine is that the smell changes. If you're not living with it, it might be a while before you notice.

FC: Ever made a really bad wine?

Giraud: You mean a wine so bad that only a mother could love it? Yes. We use it for cleaning tile.

FC: Do you sell your wine?

Giraud: No. We run our operation like a community-supported agriculture (CSA) co-op. Members put in money, and they get a share of the bounty in proportion to their investment.

FC: So if you're not making money and you don't get to live in a vineyard, why do it?

Giraud: For the camaraderie. As someone once joked, it takes a lot of beer to make wine.

Kelly Alexander is an award-winning food writer who lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Illustration by A. Richard Allen

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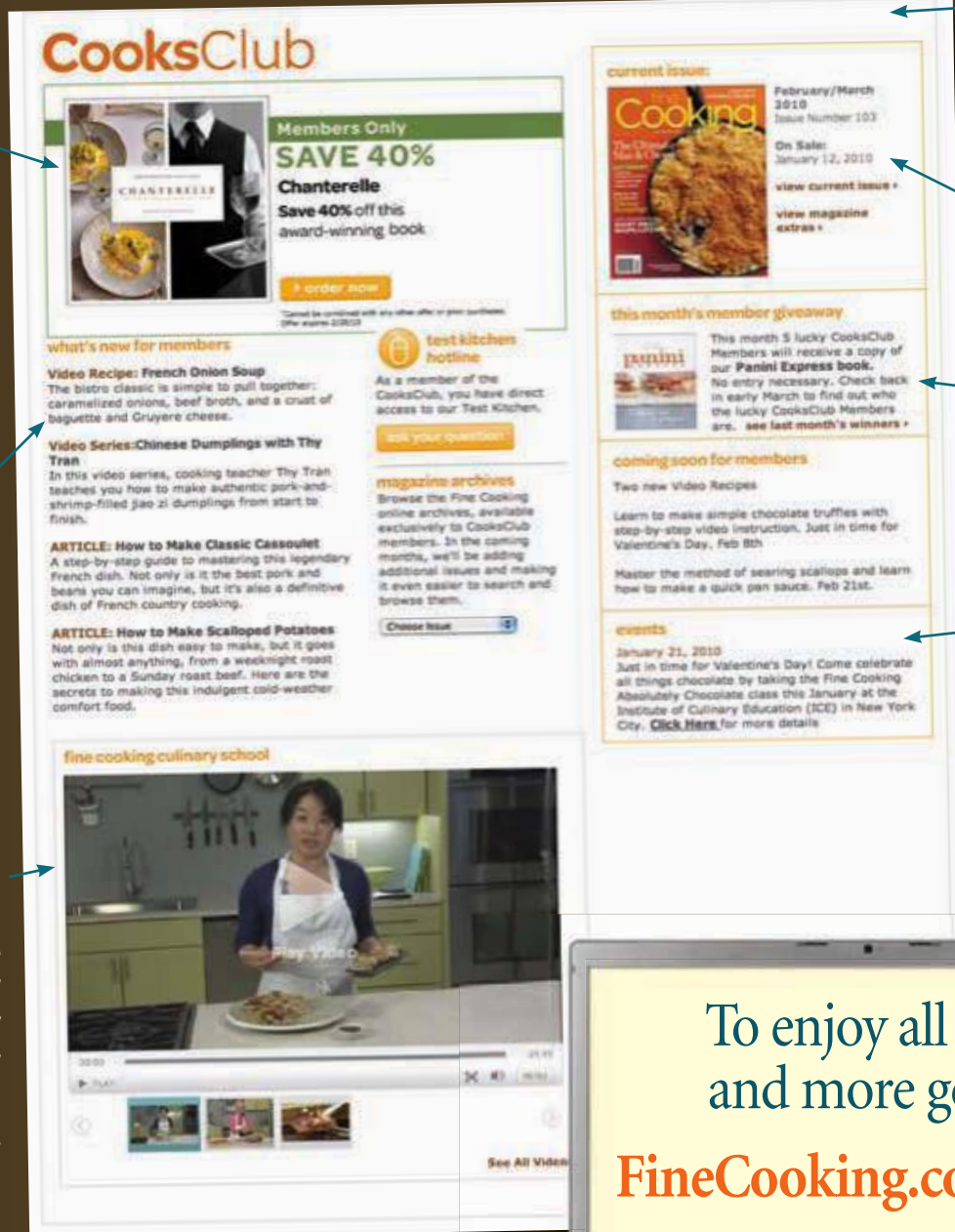
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